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The Role of Touat in the African Trans-Saharan Caravan Trade
(15 C to 19 C)

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Dedications

I dedicate this research for The sake of Allah, the Almighty Creator and our Master.

Our great Teacher and Messenger; Mohammed (Peace Be upon Him), who taught us the purpose of life.

To my DEAREST PARENTS, who never stop giving me all what they have "Love".

To my BELOVED FAMILY, who leads me through the valley of darkness, with the light of hope, encouragements and corroboration, whom I cannot help loving endlessly, the symbol of love and giving.

To my friends, who encouraged and supported me.

To All the people who entered in my life, especially those who touch the fruit of my heart,

I dedicate this research, to my Second Family;

My brilliant Professors, Teachers, classmates and colleagues...

Messaoud BELLAH



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Abstract

The West African desert was a crossroad for The Trans-Saharan Trade from the immemorial times. Traders as well as travelers from the Sahel, the North African coast, Europe and the Western used to cross West Africa and vice versa via Touat. Trade routes have always been active, even prior to the kingdoms of the Western and Central Sudan. During its height between the 8th and the late 19th centuries, Touat served as a cultural main road for the different peoples and tribes along the trade route; and is still serving up till nowadays. The type of relationship that arose at that time was not only for economic reasons, but also socio-cultural and religious exchanges were other consequences of the frequent contact taking place between the different parts. Hence, this research focuses on the period between (15thC to 19thC) to examine Touat's role before the Arab conquest till the European interference. Then, light will be shed on the special importance of the socio-cultural exchange as well as commercial profits the area witnessed. That is to say, the mutual contact between traders and the locals led to a vast exchanges; in culture, sciences, languages and dialects, religions, traditions and even customs. The objective of this study is to shed light on a forgotten history and civilization that had an important role in the Trans-Saharan Trade. In order to achieve the purposes of this study, emphasis will be put on Touat and its role in the trans-Saharan trade, the motives that made the convoys pass through the Touat desert and the leading roads. Then, more focus will be put on the consequences of the socio-cultural exchanges through the commercial caravans, and how they influenced the Touatians as well as the other cities. Furthermore, one will cast more light on the Golden Ages of the Trans-Saharan Trade, the decline and its consequences, and how the trans-Saharan trade led to the transatlantic slave trade between the west of Africa and the Europeans as well as the New World.

Key words

- Touat
- Socio-cultural
- Trans-Saharan Trade
- Religion
- Traders
- Exchange

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General Introduction

Touat is one of the oldest provinces in the Sahara, which had a notable role in commercial transactions, in addition to scientific communication. Moreover, the spread of Islam and linking cultural ties between other cities. Where it, initially, assumed commercial importance as an axes transit point for commercial convoys coming from the north and south of the Saharan Africa, and the center of the gathering of pilgrims coming from southern Morocco. It is important to know that these commercial routes were accompanied by a socio-cultural and scientific movement; due to the scholars who came with traders and interested in the dissemination of Islam and science in the Sahara and the majority of the entire Africa. The province of Touat attracted the attention of scholars and researchers, since it became a scientific atmosphere known in many of the Islamic Towns, and a refuge of scholars and the gathering of ascetics and guiders.

Despite the historical and scientific importance of the region, where its history has been in the field of forgetfulness, its manuscripts and writings have long been hidden in the shelves, and vulnerable to the small insects. Until some historians focused their research to the role of civilization represented by the province of Touat, their writings began to brush dust progressively. Among the most important works that have touched on the history of this region are: "Articles and Research in Heritage" by Dr. Ahmed Djafari and Dr Mebark Djafari.

The aim of This research is to shed light on a territory district that played a remarkable role in the African trans-Saharan caravans trade between the 15th and 19th C, since it was the main transit point for the caravans, and a main a break in a journeying station before continuing its traveling to south of the Saharan Africa. It, also, gives a general' stations of the various leading roads, and commercial network. Furthermore, security, generosity of its people, its markets and its profitable commodities, explained the intellect that made passengers as well as merchants passed through the region during their trips. It also gives an overview of the leading routes to various directions and cities as well as the reasons that led to the decline of the trans-Saharan trade, moreover, the role that our large Sahara had played in weaving the socio-cultural ties in the northern shores of the Maghreb with West Africa as well as economic activity. Most writings and studies in the history of the region have not been interested in studying the commercial movement during its middle ages, and how could be flourished, or in other word, how shall we do to build a future and vision further situation. Their studies were concerned with

the scientific Renaissance that had been practised by Shikhs, who were interested in their writings in the anthropological and sociological, and in most of the time, religious scriptures.

In other words, within this project, we try to have a glimpse on the importance the region of Touat in spreading local culture through the frequent exchanges taking place along the centuries. This entails that answers should be provided to the following research questions:

- Did Touat contribute in spreading Arabic/Muslim culture?
- If so, how important was Touat in spreading such culture to the neighbouring countries?

As hypotheses, one might suggest that:

- Maybe Touat spread its culture through commerce and scholars.
- Maybe Touat was a reason behind in spreading of Islam in the neighbouring countries.

For that, this research has been divided into three chapters. The first one, titled Geographical and Historical Background, sheds light on the geographical location of the area, indicating the characteristics of the region. Then, one will figure-out the humanistic movement over time, and how they managed their lives.

The second chapter deals with Caravans' journey through Touat. In this chapter we will elaborate the importance of the region, then, the motives that led the convoys took to pass-through and its leading roads. To achieve the aim of this part, it would be better to elaborate the socio-cultural as economical exchanges.

Finally, in the last chapter, more emphasis will be put on the Golden Ages and the decline of the Trans-Saharan Trade. In this chapter, we will illustrate the chronological and historical invasions up on the region, and how the traditional trans-Saharan caravan trade declined.

In order to answer these questions, we followed the historical approach which is characterized by scrutiny and objectivity in the narration of events, and then applying the analytical approach to the factors and reasons that led to the development of the region in terms of civilization, scientific and commercial based on several manuscripts, articles and researches, local books, some historical conclusions and facts about the region.

Chapter One:

Touat's Geographical and Historical Background

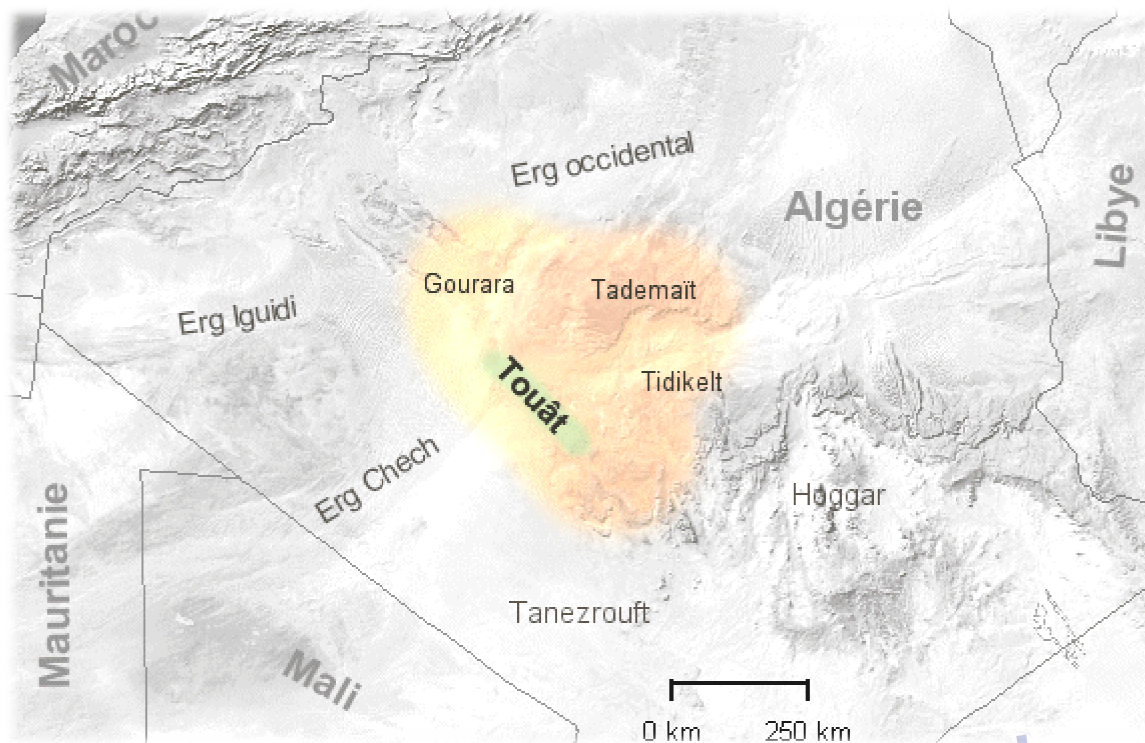
Introduction

Since immemorial times, many compelling reasons pushed humans to leave their homeland, seeking for a better life, or at least, a secure life. This harmonic movement formed ethnically diverse groups of different sects building civilizations, and leaving a narrative history from generation to generation. In the first part of this chapter we will give a brief overview of the geographical location of the area, indicating the characteristics of the region. Then in the second one, we are going to figure-out the humanistic movement over time, and how did they managed their lives.

i. Touat's Geographical Background

Touat is situated in the center of Great Sahara, North Africa. It is centered between the Grand Erg Occidental in the north to the Tadmeit and Tanzrouft Plateau in the south east, and the Erg Chech in the west. It contains of three regions; Gourara, Touat and Tidikelt (see Map: 01.)

Map:01. The location of Touat.



Source: Image: <http://www.cosmovisions.com//cartes/Touat.png> (Access on January, 13, 2017)

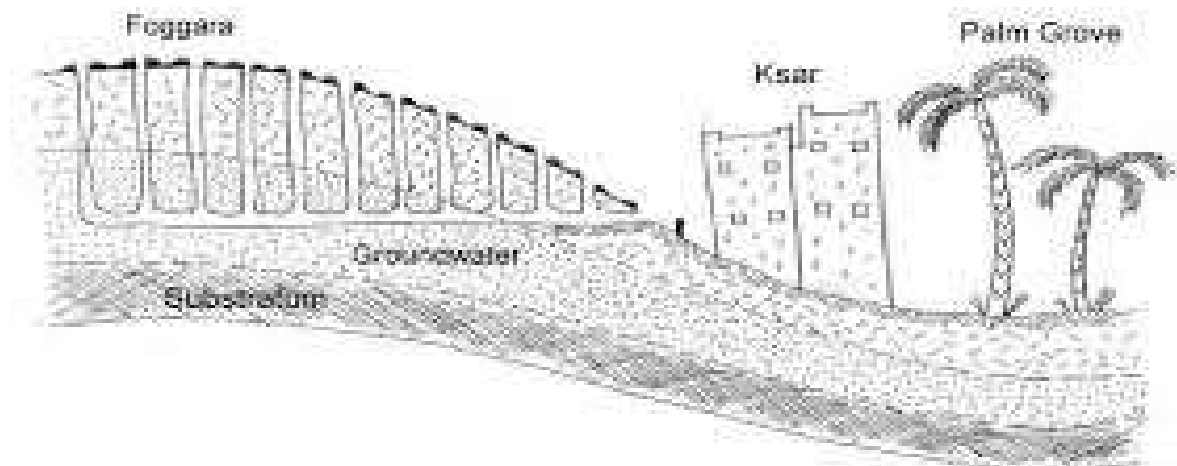
It is characterized as being a set of oases scattered in a string throughout the region, along the eastern edge of Wadi Messaoud; a continuation of Wadi es-Saoura, after the drought of Wadi Guir¹ in 4th century AH. Each oasis is surrounding a ksar (Gsar; singular of Gsour or K'sur) associated by clay walls and sometimes of stones, of which all circumfluent by forts or Kasbah (Gasbah).

The dry desert climate prevails the region since there is rare rainfall, and agriculture depends on the groundwater. To adopt the lack of water, The Touatian people irrigate their gardens from the foggara; which is a series of wells flows from highest plateaus, connected to each other in an artesian manner towards the orchards. Thousands of palms are irrigated by this mysterious system, and of course, used for drink (see Figure one and two.)

¹ * It is a large valley that starts from the side of Morocco and extends to the desert through Touat, it is one of the longest valleys of Morocco distance.

* Investigation Mohammed, Haji, Ar-Rihla Al Ayachia, (Rabat: Dar El Maghrib Publications for Composition, Translation and Publishing, Second Edition, 1397 AH- 1977), Part I, p. 18.

Figure one: Scheme describes the foggara.



Source: <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/17/23/e2/1723e27846920a16955caf7a72821040.jpg> (Access on Mai, 22, 2018)

Figure. 02: Kasriya, Fggara: Water distribution system for irrigation



Source:

https://www.google.com/url?sa=i&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=&url=http%3A%2F%2Fsayahtadlar.blogspot.com%2F2013%2F11%2Fblog-post_7.html&psig=AOvVaw0CNbDkrRhj7WPQP70HTC1B&ust=1527732976263123

ii. Touat's Background and historical context

There have been many historians spoke about the origin of the naming of Touat in different, some of them have traced it from a historical interpretation, while others went to find a linguistic perspective to the origin of the word Touat, tow of the most common narrations that explained the origin of its word we find:

The first one: Abu Abdullah Muhammad al-Ansari in his book (Fahrasset er-Rasaà) where he claimed that the name of Touat is one of the sections descended from the tribes of the Masked as he said: "... and the masked are the tribes of the desert in the south, known by this name because they wear blue Masks, including; the Touareg, Lamtah, Lamtunah and Tuwat ..."²

The second narration which sounds as the most appropriate; it is the vision of Moulay Ahmed Tahir Idrissi, who mentioned that Touat was named by this name because it is helpful for worshipping, and this is why it inhabited by Many scholars, scientists and dervishes and righteous.³ The word, in Arabic 'wata, yuati' means; something helpful and easy to be familiar with.

When we go back through history, it is certain that the area of Touat dates back to the prehistoric times, from pre-Islamic period. It was called the tribal desert, and then increased its architecture and housings after the drought of the Guir River in the fourth century AH.⁴

Historians and travelers, Arabs as well as non Arabic ones, mentioned Touat in their books; like Ibn Howkel, Hassan Al-Wazzan , El-Karkhi, El-Yaqubi, Ibn Battuta (died in 779 AH) visited *Bouda, which was the capital of Touat befor Tamentit*⁵, in (754^H / 1353) during his travelling and Ibn Khaldun (born Tunis 1332, died Egypt 1406_ 808 AH), Abu Salem Al-Ayashi, the taveler al Haj Ben-Ed din al Aghawati ,... Also from the Europeans side, namely the German traveler Gerhard Rolf, the French historians Martin, and Bernard. As for the scholars of the region and its well-known travelers, it was written by Sheikh Moulay Ahmad bin Hashim, Sheikh Sidi Abdul Qadir ibn Umar (died in 1121 AH), in addition to Sheikh Sidi

² Al-Rasa, Abdullah Al-Ansari. Al-Rassa Index , Tunisia: Investigation of Mohammed Annabi, Antique Library, 1918, P. 151

³ Salmi, Zainab and Budwaya, Mebkhout. The scientific movement in the province of Touat during centuries 08 - 10 AH, Tlemcen, Algeria: University of Abu Bakr Belkaid 2011 - 2012, p. xiii.

⁴ * It is a large valley starting from the Maghreb side and extends to the desert to Touat, the longest valleys of Morocco in the distance ...

• Source <http://www.taouat.net/main/index.php/2014-11-01-07-37-21> (Access on Mai, 22, 2018)

⁵ Ibn Batouta: Tuhfat An-Nazhar fi Ghara'ib Al-Amsar wa Aja'ib Al-Asfar, Beirut House, pp 699,700.

Abdel Rahman Ibn Baumer Al-Tinilani And Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdul Karim bin Abdul Haq (died in 14 AH), Sheikh Moulay Ahmed Idrissi Tahiri and Sheikh Sidi Ahmed Al-Nahawi,...⁶

The area of Touat has been known throughout history as a safe and secure land, and that is what made it a destination of a large number of scholars from all the Arab and Islamic world, despite the dryness and lack of livelihoods. It was known as "salt-marsh", many sand and wind, not surrounded by mountains or trees. Furthermore, it was the weakest country in all of Maghreb. The majority of its people are vulnerable weak, and of the weakness of its people and the control of the power of souls, many of the righteous and the pious and the devout hearts have emerged.

Touat region was well populated from prehistoric times, as it is a primitive human habitat since two million years. Evidences and monuments carved on rocks reflect the circumstances of life living and social environment, such as drawings that attest to that hunting was the concerns of the people of this region. Some historical sources referred that the Garamantes; Werner, Louis asserted that: "(possibly from the Berber *igherman* / *iyerman*, meaning: "cities" in modern Berber; or possibly from *igerramen* meaning "saints, holy/sacred people" in modern Berber, since in *Z'natiya* means "K'sar") were a Berber tribe who developed an advanced civilization in ancient southwestern Libya. They used an elaborate underground irrigation system, and founded prosperous Berber kingdoms or city-states in the Fezzan area of Libya, in the Sahara desert. They were a local power between 500 BC and 700 AD. There is little textual information about the Garamantes, but their written language was a still nearly indecipherable proto-Tifaniq, the script of modern-day Tuaregs." Even the name Garamantes was a Greek name, which the Romans later adopted. Available information comes mainly from Greek and Roman sources, as well as archaeological excavations in the area, though large areas in ruins remain unexcavated. Another important source of information is the abundant rock art, which often depicts life prior to the rise of the realm".⁷ Thus, the ancient people on this territory had left also some of the stone monuments that reflect the crafts had been mastered, and represent the oldest we know of human industry. Obviously, some of them are still in Admer, Reggan, Aoulef and In Salah.... This indicates

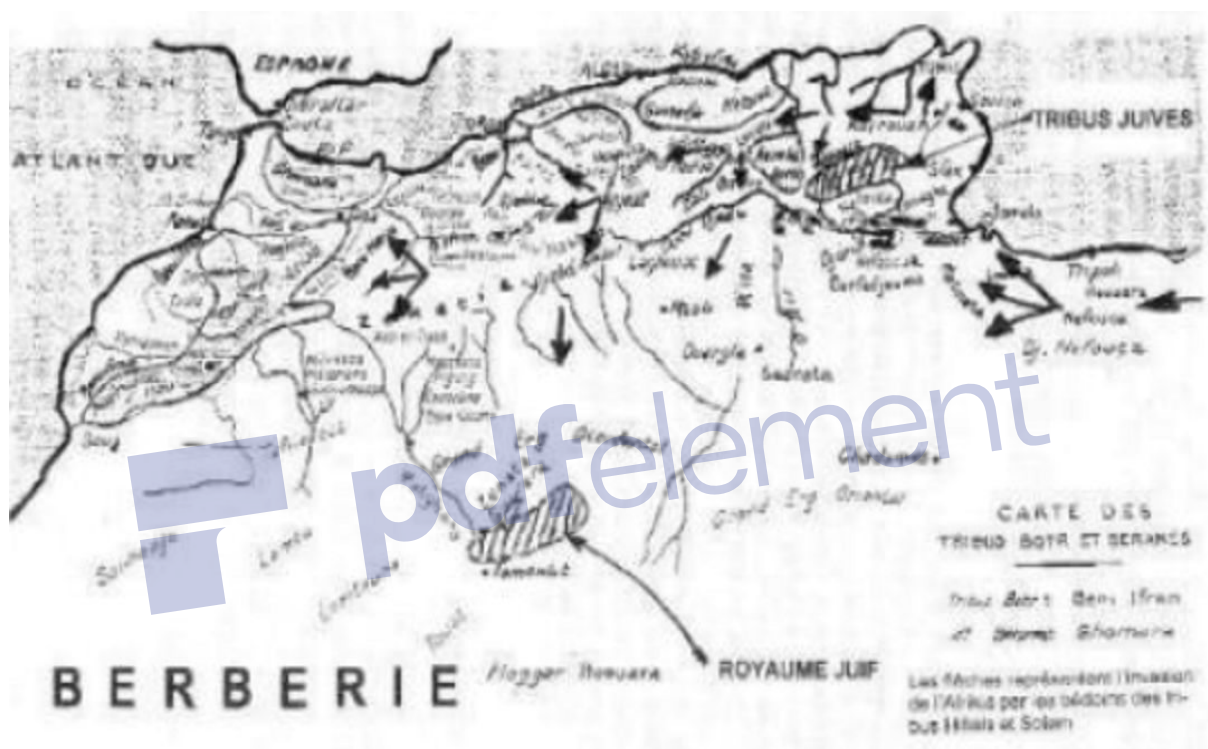
⁶ Ibn Khaldun; Al 'Ibar (Al Mukaddima), Khediouia Print Boulak, Egypt 1384 AH, Part VI, pp 59

⁷ Werner, Louis. "Libya's Forgotten Desert Kingdom". saudiaramcoworld.com. (Saudi Aramco World. Retrieved August 15, 2016. May/June 2004); Volume 55, P. 3

that the area of Touat is one of the most striking areas in history, dating back to prehistoric era, according to some writers and researchers, even in Tassili and Al-Hogar.⁸

The first inhabitants of the area according to some historical studies indicate that the region was inhabited since ancient times. It has been settled down by people of white origin from the Mediterranean basin in the 6th century BC. The Carthaginians and Romans also as they passed by in their business transactions (see Map.02.)

Map: 02 .The movements of Berber tribes.



Source: <http://www.elishean.fr/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/carte-BERBERIE.jpg> (Access on Mai, 22, 2018).

The region is also known as the displacement of several tribes some of them are Zenata, Arabs and even Jewish.

The Sanhajah tribes are considered to the Berber origin, the first inhabitants of Touat. This is indicated by the historical sources, which confirm that, the origin of these Berbers are the masked, whom were the first to settle this territory. Among the historical sources that trace their origins to the masked Berbers is the famous historian Abdurrahman Ibn Khaldun, who confirmed the original in his book "Al-'Ibar'." Ibn Khaldun says in one of his historical texts:

⁸ Source: <http://www.hadaik.com/vb/showthread.php?t=7545>

"... This class of Sanhajah, are the masked in a palace behind the desert sand in the south, they moved elsewhere for ages before the conquest. No one could know the first...", "and they detained between the countries of the Berbers and the country of Sudan, and took the masks to be a characteristic among other countries. They multiplied and multiplied their tribes of the controversy... " ⁹

What is mentioned in the text of Ibn Khaldun is that the masked from a class of Sinhaja tribe was the first to inhabit Touat and settled long before the Islamic conquests. As we deduce from it a historical fact that this text does not have any historical definition of the time period in which the masked came down and settled in this region.

If we go back centuries before the Islamic conquests, we find that Berber tribes were migrating since the Roman era from the north, where the center of the Roman Empire and the Byzantine, to the southern direction of the desert lands in order to escape its authority. Also, because of the arbitrariness exercised on them, and the taxes imposed on them. Furthermore, due to political instability in the North African Byzantine Empire, and security unrest. This displacements and fleeing s to the south were individuals and collective migration, for stability, security and seeking for livelihoods and their original habitat that they lost in the northern regions. This encouraged the migrants to break into the natural difficulties and penetrated into the territory of the Sahara, where they managed to settle the oases that were full of fruits, water and pastures. ¹⁰

After the Islamic conquest of the Maghreb countries, during the first century AH (7th century AD), the Barbaric tribes which migrated to the southern regions fled the impact and superiority of the Arab element. As a result, they tried to adapt the living conditions of the desert and accustomed the natural conditions that helped them to get along with. To avoid engaging in conflicts of which they faced in the north, barbaric tribes were forced to leave and settle elsewhere where they found security and tranquility, in distant oases with allot of orchards.

The origin of these barbaric tribes displaced from the north to the Sanhajah tribe, as confirmed by the historian Muhammad Abu Ras al-Nasiri, (died during the first half of the thirteenth century AH), as the historian Abdul Rahman Ibn Khaldun said, "The tribes of Sanhajah are the indigenous people of the region, where he says:" The tribes of Qdalah and their homes direction the Ma'akel of the Arabs of Susa al-Aqsa, Lamtouna and Trika in a

⁹ www.hadaik.com. Op cit. Ibid

¹⁰ www.hadaik.com. Op cit. Ibid.

meeting with the people of Thaoui Mansour ..., the kings of Lamtuna and Massoufa in the meeting of Middle Maghreb and Lamta in a meeting of Arab Zab and a Terka in an a meeting with Africa." ¹¹

It is clear from what the historian Abu Ras al-Nasiri claims that the Masked people who settled in the province of Touat, who do not represent one tribe but different tribes, spread from the coast of the Nile to the Atlantic Ocean to the west. Because of the distance from each other, differences appeared in their tongues.

Among the tribes of Sanhajah which settled in Touat, the author of the book "Aja'ib al Asfar" considered them Qdala tribe, which formed the tribe of Bani Ma'kel "*Banou Hilal*" of the Arabs of Al-Sus Al Aqsa, and the tribe of "Lamtouna," which Ibn Khaldun mentioned previously. According to the historian Baba Haidah, the first tribe of the Sanhajah thoes who they landed in Timmantit, and the tribe of "Trika" which descent from the tribe of "Bani Mansour." From the historical sources, it is clear that the tribe of Tarqa is one of the most prominent Sanhajite tribes. From this tribe they derived the name of Touareg, the only group of Berbers who wear the maskes, or who they are known as the Blue Man to this day, Ibn Khaldun considered them as a layer of Sanhajah.

In a mythical tale of Touareg, Henry Loth mentions that their first home was in the province of Touat and later moved to the area of al-Hoqqar for many reasons. The most important of these, he asserted that the Touareg tribes are the descendents from a woman named Tinhainan. This woman came from the Tafilalet region of Morocco to Touat, accompanied by a women that served her called "Tqama", and then Tinhinan gave birth to a girl called "Kella", which all the members of the tribe, "Keel Aghla" descended from her. While the servent "Tqama" gave birth to two daughters, which descended from them the tribes namely; "Imgad", "Doq Gali "and the tribe of" Ayet A'ayan ".

The author of "Al Kaoul el-Bassit fi Akhbar Tamentit," by the historian Baba Hida, says:

"The first whom inhabited it and built first palace, or k'sar said to be the masked children of King Yusuf ibn Tashifin, when their state was broken in Morocco and Andalusia, ... They fled until they reached the land of Touat, they found the drought,

¹¹ www.hadaik.com. Op cit. Ibid.

they knew that it is safe land because the soldiers cannot afford it, they built the houses, dug the water and settled...»¹²

But if we look at the texts above, we note that they agree that the first to inhabit the province of Touat were masked of Sanhajih origins, however they differ in the time period. So we can deduce from all that the The masked came to the region before the Islamic conquests, and after the Islamic conquest of the region of Morocco, specifically after the end of the era of the Almoravid state.

After the arrival of the Sinhaja tribes of Berber origin, Touat also became known as the migration of other Berber tribes from the north, the Zanata tribes, seeking tranquility, fleeing the political and social upheaval in the Maghreb, especially after the departure of the Fatimids. For the Zanata tribes, Touat was a refuge away from the persecution they had suffered in the north, preferring to settle in desert lands of harsh natural conditions, instead of submitting to their rulers. After the establishment of the Almohad state in the middle of the sixth century AH (12 AD), and as a result of its hostile policy towards the tribes of Znata Berber, the tribes of Znata, as well as, the tribe of "Maghrawa" and "Beni Yafran", they are obliged to migrate to places far from the domination of the Almohad state, especially after the murdering of their Emir Messaoud bin Wana Al Maghraoui. The desert was their refuge, where they landed in Al-G'rara and Wadi Al-Henna in the Touat province.

Ibn Khaldun also chronicled that the Sanhajah and Zanata tribes were considered among the northern Berber tribes that inhabited the province of Touat. This is clear from his saying: "... and other areas of the desert inhabited by the tribes of Zenata; Tengourarin's k'sur on ten stages from Tlemcen, ending to three hundred or more in one valley, in the south-west of Touat and then Tamentit".¹³

The Moroccan historian "Salawi Naciri" died in 1315 AH / 1897 in his book "al-Istiqsa' li-Akhbar al-Maghreb al-Aqsa'", that the Zenata tribes settled in the province of Touat and built multiple architectural palaces such as; the K'sur of Touat, Bouda, Tamentit, T'sabit and Tingourarin, which was most of its population from Zenata. This indicates that the Zenata tribes represented, together with the Sanhajah tribes, an important human strength in the province of Touat, which was characterized by its agricultural activity of planting palm trees.

¹² www.hadaik.com. Op cit. Ibid.

¹³ www.hadaik.com. Op cit. Ibid.

The Zenata tribes were able to adapt to the natural conditions of the Great Sahara Region and, due to this, the Zenati element was able to establish the features of its civilization along the south-east and south-west. These monuments include the construction of oases and palaces, the remains of which are still inhabited today. These palaces include Bouda, Tammitit, Tikurarin to the east, and the palaces of the west. The historians Abdul Aziz al-Fustali in writing "Manahil As_safa'", most of these palaces were inhabitants of the Barbaric Zenata tribes. These cities and palaces have played a major role in spreading the features of the Islamic civilization on the one hand, and activating its domains on the other, between the various regions of the north and the south, especially with the western Sudan.

Since the 7th century AH (13 AD), the province of Touat has attracted other tribes, as well as the Berber tribes mentioned above, namely the Bani Maaqel from the tribe of Bani Hilal and Bani Salim, of Arab origin, who have been coming to the regions of the Islamic Maghreb since the 5th century AH. Among the most notable tribes of the Arab tribes of Bani Hilal, which became a high dominant in the desert during the seventh century AH (13 AD), the tribe of Beni Maaqel, which were subjected the obedience to the authority of the Marinian Berber state in Fez, where the people used as soldiers loyal to them and their state, And to bring taxes throughout the southern desert.

Bani Maaqel tribes were able to profit the weakness of the Marinian state and take control on the territory of Touat, establishing a social system of their own, similar to their former regime in the Arabian Peninsula. The orientalist Remote Veron describes the Beni Maakel and their social system as:

"... They were from the tribes of South Arabia by descent; the tribes that send their hairs always long, their clothes and some of their bodies are colored blue. They did not come as conquerors like the Arabs of Bani Mahalal and Bani Salim, but they came in convoys. Their number increased from the thirteenth century AD in the oases of Touat and Djidara. In the fourteenth century AD, they became the source of the turmoil to the Sultans of Marin in Marrakesh and ended up settling in all of southern Marrakech. They found conditions similar to those prevailing in the Arab countries; a vast grassland bordered north by land owned by the settlers but there are no oases, where the Berbers shepherds were pasturing around it. Therefore, when the Marins were expelled in Marrakesh, they infiltrated, Bani Ma'kel sneaked across to

the desert, and put the foundations of a new social order similar to what they had in the lands of the Arabs." ¹⁴

We conclude from this text that the Arabic tribe of Bani Maqal found in the desert same conditions they had previously experienced in the Arabian Peninsula, which depended on traveling and herding, helped them to adapt quickly to this new environment in the province of Touat.

Raymond Veyron also confirms that the tribes of the Arabic Beni Maakel did not intend to come to the province of Touat during the sixth century AH (12 AD) by invasion, as was the case with other tribes such as the tribe of Bani Hilal, but its purpose was stability. As evidenced by the fact that it was mixed with other barbaric tribes, such as the tribe of Z'nata, and adapted to the natural conditions of the province of Touat in particular and the southern desert lands in general. They had become a prestigious place among others, and contributed to the dissemination of the features of Islamic civilization between the northern and southern regions of the Islamic Maghreb and the Sudan. This is what Raymond referred to in his book "The Grand Sahara" when he says: "In the twelfth century AD, a group of people appeared in an oasis in the west. They came from the south of the Arabian Peninsula and are called the Arab Ma'akil. They did not come as invaders as Bani Hilal, but as nomads... They mingled with Zenata in Touat and Gourara."¹⁵

Other Arab tribes have settled in the province of Touat in different periods of time, including Oulad Mohammed, Al-Khanaf'isa, Al-Muharza, Oulad Talha, Oulad Yaish, Awlad Lakham, Oulad Omar, Awlad Ghanem, Oulad Dream, Oulad Zanan, Thoui M'nià, Oulad el Hajj,...

In addition to the Berber and Arab tribes, the province of Touat Known the existence of the stability of people of Zingi origin who had settled this region in successive periods under different conditions and formed a social class; some of them were locally and descendants from the Sahara's Neolithic-era inhabitants, other so-called haratins or peasants. Most of them were slaves who have no property, who had long been subjugated by the Zenata Berbers. They are used by other social classes in cultivating their orchards and grazing their camels, as well as in other works and trades, digging foggaras, leather dyeing, building houses., and other handicrafts that other social classes refuse to do. This encouraged and developed slave trade in this region, where large numbers of black skins were bought as

¹⁴ www.hadaik.com. Op cit. Ibid.

¹⁵ www.hadaik.com. Op cit. Ibid

slaves. This was not exclusive to male slaves only, but they also bought females, who would give birth to children, and the blood became more and more numerous and became one of the classes in which the Touatian community is formed.

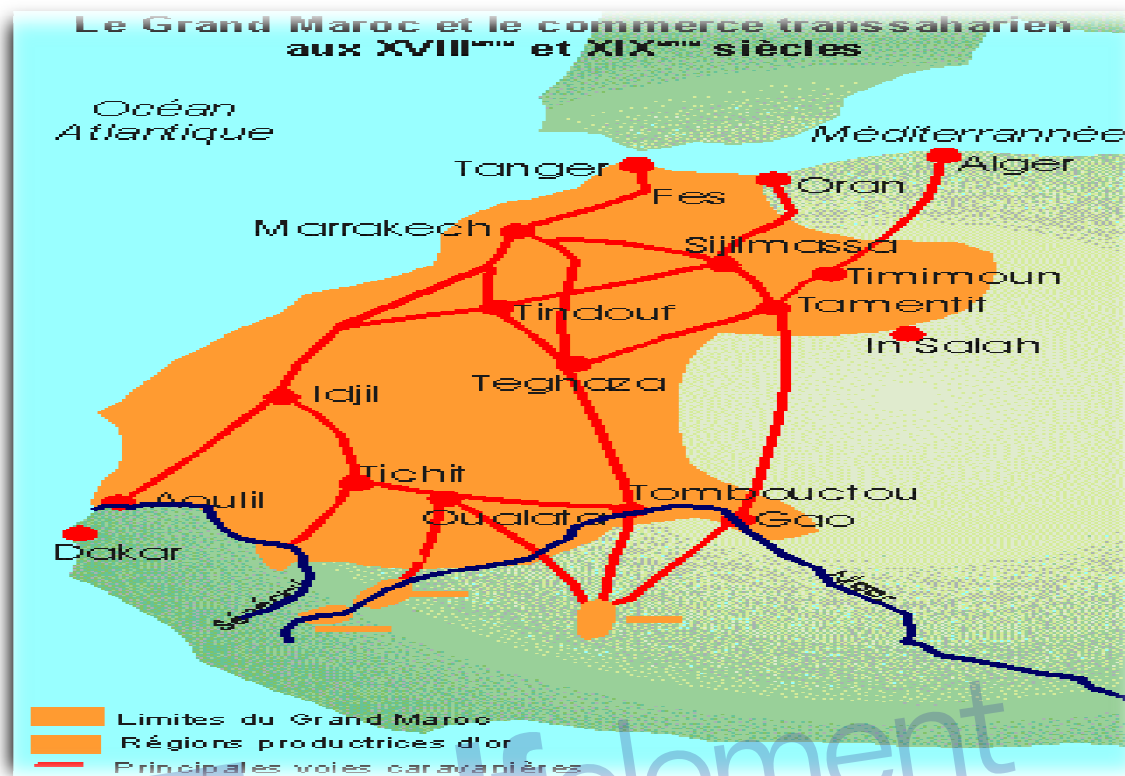
During the second so-called Arab invasion, the Merinids, section of the Zenata, took refuge in the Gourara (11th century); later, having become masters of Morocco, they wanted to extend their authority towards the South. In 1315, the son of Sultan Abu Ali, party Tafilelt, conquers Touat, Gourara and Tamentit; but he himself and his brother went there independently, and all ties of vassalage were almost immediately broken.¹⁶

Touat also knew the delegations and stability of other peoples of Jewish origin for centuries until the end of the tenth century AH (16 AD). "Echalier" considers the Jews who were in the province of Touat are undoubtedly Berber became Jews by the original Jews, who fled from the massacres of Israel, which committed by the Romans in the first century AD. They are supposed to have disappeared from the province of Touat according to the book "Al-Fawat from the history of Touat ", by: Abdullah Hammadi Idrissi (Algeria: 2012). (Oran, Algeria: 13 Rajab 1439 AH / March 31, 2018). The author claims that the Algerian scholar Abu Abdullah Mohammed bin Abdul Karim bin Mohammed al-Maghili Tlemceni (909 AH / 1504 AD), is the one who exterminated the Jews and expelled them from Touat, when they broke the covenants and made violations in Islam, and business practices after wearing the dress of Muslims. He sought to gather *fatwas* and carried out intellectual and religious reforms, in which he held debates with scholars from various countries and places. During his journey to Sudan and in the Hajj (He went in 904 AH / 1498, and returned back in 905 AH / 1499), in where he met with the great scientist Jalaluddin Al-Suyuti and had debates with him in many intellectual fields, including logic.

Under the of The Saadiens dynasty, who relied on the Tafilelt, a first Moroccan effectively occupayed Touat by army in 1540. On the other hand, the Touatian people rebelled almost immediately, and a new expedition failed. Moulay Ahmed and Mansour had to recommence the conquest in 1588, until he undertook the hole of Sudan 1591 (see Map: 03.)

¹⁶ Source: <http://www.cosmovisions.com/histTouat.htm> (Access on January, 13, 2017)

Map: 03. The Moroccan Campaign to Timbuktu.



Source: https://i.skyrock.net/5531/77725531/pics/2988715029_1_3_cKZgRxfR.gif (Access on Mai 22, 2018)

In 1845 a treaty, between France and Morocco, stipulated that in the south of the k'sur of Figuig and Moghar, the country being deserted, the delimitation is superfluous areas. The Gourara, the Touat and the Tidikelt thus remained outside the Moroccan as well as French territory; as they were east of the meridian where the border stopped, they were in the zone of French influence.¹⁷

After that, in 1873, General de Gallifet having occupied El Goléa, the assemblies of Timimoun, Aougguerout and In-Salah offered him to submit. The situation was modified by the massacre of the Flatters expedition, concerted in a meeting held in In-Salah, in December 1880, by the Tuareg. From this time the people of In-Salah, like the Touareg Hoggar, strove to find protection in Morocco. In 1886 and 1887, the chiefs of Touat and Gourara made representations to the Sultan, but France protested at Fez, and the quarrels of the Berber of Gourara, with the noble Arab chiefs of Touat, paralyzed the effect of these steps. However, in

¹⁷ <http://www.cosmovisions.com/histTouat.htm>. Op. Cit. Ibid.

Touat, a personage established in the oasis of Timmi took the title of Moroccan pasha, but unfortunately, the Touatian tribes were too divided to agree to unite under a governor.

Moreover, the Touatian people were, in the first of all, divided into two great parties or Soufis groups; Ihammed and Soufian: a division that dated back to the time of the Almohads (thirteenth century). They were in Berbers administered by their assemblies (Djemaa) who ruled in the Gourara, and Arabs obedient to their religious or nobility leaders. In general, the Sofian represented the Berber element and the Ihammed the Arabic ones. They were still so in religious parties affiliated with rival orders. Mouley Taiyeb, whose sherif of Ouezzan was the chief; heirs of the Edrisite dynasty. The Taiyby were ill-disposed to the Moroccan dynasty, and Ouled-sidi-Sheikh order, whose importance was more political than religious. The descendants of Sidi Cheikh were, during the French conquest, the feudal chiefs of the Algerian Sahara. Their influence was considerable in Gourara. in 1882 Shikh Bou Amama, leader of the southern Oran insurrection, belonged to this family; he withdrew after the insurrection to Deldoul, oasis of Gourara, and thence consolidated his influence over the Saharan nomads from the Moroccan Beberes to the Touareg. He then left these areas to settle in Figuig; the Kadiria order (Sidi Abd-el Kader Djilani) was, as in all of Africa, important but not very militant. Then of Kerzaz, which was attached to the Edrisies, had its center on the wadi Saoura, in the north of Touat, it was peaceful and favorable to the French understanding. The brotherhood of Bekkay, which had its center in Timbuktu, derived from the Kadria, influential in the southern oases of Akabli (Tidikelt). Inzegmir (in Touat) was also peaceful in principle under the Senoussi order, which was considered very hostile to the Europeans, ruled at In-Salah.¹⁸

After having planned an extension of influence and followed to this end the sterile talks with the Ouled-sidi-Sheikh, the French government continued the junction of Algeria and Sudan, undertook of the large Saharan oases of Touat. This was the consequence of the Flatters expedition, a geological missionary escorted by Captain Pein with 140 men. When they arrived near In-Salah, they were attacked at Igosten by 1200 fighters, in a bloody defeat (December 28, 1899). The next day they occupied In-Salah; almost all the Badjouda had perished in the struggle. On January 5, 1900, they defeated troops from Inghar. However, Commander Baumgarten, who had come with 400 men to reinforce the garrison, could not take Inghar (24 January), so it was necessary to send a column with artillery. On the 19th of March he seized Inghar, and took the pasha of Timmi, chief of Touat as prisoner; then he

¹⁸ <http://www.cosmovisions.com/histTouat.htm>. Op. Cit. Ibid.

submitted the oases of Akabli and Aoulef, and completing the conquest of the Tidikelt. It was the job of Colonel Menestrel to take Tabelkoza and Timimoun (May 1900). Another column had occupied in April 5th in Igli, at the head of the wadi Saoura, to cut the Touat out from Maroc. At the same time, the southern Oran railway was pushed as far as Duveyrier (Djenien-Bou-Rezg), towards Figuig. However, south of the Gurara, a bloody fighting took place in September, at the ksour of Sahela and Metarfa, the Ksouriens being supported by Berbers from southern Morocco.

A new corps was formed in January 1901, under the orders of General Servièrre. He submitted the Deldoul, with Sahela and Metarfa, Brinken and Touat in February 1901. At this moment he knew that the Berbers had made a surprise on Timimoun, which repulsed with damages in February 18. He faced them in the oasis of Charouin, inflicted heavy losses, and ended by the submission of these k'surs. Another corps, led by General Risbourg, had, from Duveyrier, occupied the oases of the north of Wadi Saoura, Beni Abbes and Kerzaz in March 1900. Then, they took the possession of the oases of Touat, Gourara and Tidikelt, which would be called "Territory of the Saharan Oases." It cost France about 40 million francs, because of the enormous expenses of the convoys of camels which accompanied and supplied the corps, and the mortality of these animals of which more than 60.000 succumbed.

Fortified posts were installed in In-Salah, Inghar and Tith or Tidikelt, Timimoun or Gourara, Adrar or Touat, Beni-Abbes (after Igli), north of Wadi Saoura; a roadway was performed to connect this last point to Djenan-ed-Dar, near Duveyrier, while waiting for the railway; another is traced from El Goléa to El Hadadra. The administration of the oases was established by the creation of annexes of the service of the indigenous affairs of Algeria in In-Salah, Timimoun and Adrar; the police were entrusted to makhzen, local horsemen dependent on the chief officers of the annex.

Under French administration until the independence of Algeria, Touat was fleetingly occupied by Morocco the day after the departure of the French troops.¹⁹

Conclusion

From the above, we can conclude that the land of Touat was merely oasis that many tribes and nomads used it as passerby. And for several circumstances was settled by these tribes and formed an instinct human diversity, and then unfortunately, not expected invaders creped to extend the dominance.

¹⁹ <http://www.cosmovisions.com/histTouat.htm>. Op. Cit. Ibid.

Chapter two:

Caravans' journey through Touat

Introduction

The earliest historical records refer that the trans- Saharan Trade was initiated by the Phoenician colony of Carthage centuries BC, where it had become a super power in the whole western Mediterranean region. The Phoenicians made full trust and confidence on Berber nomads of the Atlas Mountains as intermediaries. The Berbers had long been in touch with the other small groups of Berbers who settled along a certain lines of Oases that stretched across the Sahara desert to the tropical West Africa. This kept mutual communication linkage between the northern Berbers, with Saharans and the West Africa.

The interactions between locals, merchants and clients helped spread Islam to the Sahara and the Western African States. The trans-Saharan trade network is the first real example of people introducing camels to cross the desert, hundreds, even up to tens of thousands of camels in the caravan. These latter would have to be prepared for months before the journey, grazing and fattening them up, since travelling across the desert was extremely dangerous. That is to say, the journey must be well planned in advance. On its way to different oases, the convoy is able to get enough water to carry on.

In its main commodities traded at this time included salt, clothes, bead, metal goods, from North Africa in exchange for West Africa gold, ivory, and slaves. In this chapter we will elaborate the importance of the region, then, the motives that led the convoys took to pass-through and its leading roads. To achieve the aim of this part, it would be better to elaborate the socio-cultural as economical exchanges, and its impacts on the Touatian people.

i. The role of Touat in the trans-Saharan trade

The Touat region was one of the desert fields with a strong presence in the commercial caravan. This is due to its geographical placement in the middle of the African Sahara, a transit area and a link between Northern African' shores, and Southern of the Sahara, Orient and West, in a wide geographical area. And this is what enabled it to take the leading role throughout a long period of time in this area until the late of the nineteenth century. Gold, copper, silver, ivory and slaves ..., were the axis of the International trade in those times, while the Western Sudan was the most important sources.

Many ancient monuments and historical sources recall that Phoenicians and Romans used the route of Touat in their trade relations with South Africa. After the spread of Islam, the region became more important for the safety of its roads, especially after it became the main road for the trans-Saharan trade convoys linking the Rustumian state with the western Sudan. Furthermore, it was a passerby for the convoys of pilgrims coming from the south of the Maghreb, the middle of the Sahara and the land Toucouleur.¹ According to statistics for the year 1319 AH / 1901 AD, the population of Touat was about 52099 inhabitant distributed in Tigourarin (22889), Central Touat (20388), Tidikelt (8822), and it consisted of three hundred and nineteen Ksur, 145185, Palm Trees.²

Furthermore, the region grew more commercially, especially after the founding of the two states: Sifria in Sidjalmasa and Ibadi in Tihert when their trade relations with the west of Sudan had flourished. The growth of many Kingdomes in the north and south while the region is situated at the crossroads between them, made it more and more active area. Subsequently, the Western Sahara trade route between Marrakech and Ghana, known as Lamtouna, was reduced and the destination turned to the center of the desert, especially after the rise of the Kingdom of Mali, in 7th c AH/ 13th C³, and the emergence of Timbuktu as a commercial destination. As a consequence, commercial caravans had to cross Touat.

¹ The Toucouleur people, also called Tukolor or Haalpulaar are a West African ethnic group native to Futa Tooro region of Senegal. There are smaller communities in Mali and Mauritania. (Anthony Appiah; Henry Louis Gates (2010). *Encyclopedia of Africa*. Oxford University Press. pp. 500–501. ISBN 978-0-19-533770-9).

² Fillas, Achille. Dictionnaire des Communes de l'algerie..., (Alger, 1903), p.210.

³ Mebarek, Djaâfri. Articles and research on the history of Touat (Algeria: Dar el-kitab al Arabi, 2006),p 64.

It should be, also noted that the great role played by the Touatian merchants in the trade, in and outside the region, since they had well welcomed by other merchants as well as towns' leaders.

This active commercial traffic began since the second century AH 8th century ⁴, and this was one of the reasons why the Jews settled in and practice trade, but their activity declined immediately after the coming of Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdul Karim al-Maghili in 891 AH / 1488.⁵ The European also were interested in exploring the dark Continent to reach the Sudan gold sources starting from Touat, since it was the place of gathering commercial caravans coming from different quarters, and exactly in Tamentit from which they carry on to Sudan; according to The Arabic geographer and historian Ibn Khaldun (born Tunis 1332, died Egypt 1406) provides a description of Touat, a place he had not visited himself, in his *Kitab al-Ibar*:

... One of their homelands lies in three stages to the south of Sijilmāsa and is called Tuwāt. It consists of 200 quṣūr strung out from west to east, of which the most easterly is called Tamanṭīt, nowadays a flourishing place and a point of departure for merchants who pass to and from, between the Maghrib and the land of Mālī of the Sūdān. ... The town of Būdā, the most westerly of these quṣūr, used to be the point of departure for Wālātan, the outpost of the Mālī territory, but it was abandoned when the Nomads Arabs from the desert of the Sūs took to acts of brigandry on the highway and molesting the caravans. They left that place and followed the route to the land of the Sūdān by way of Tamanṭīt. ⁶

The first European came to Touat were the Italian ones especially the southerners. The Genoan merchant Antonio Malfante was able to reach it in 850 AH / 1447 and then return to Genoa after he stayed for almost two years. He was quoted as saying that his host in Touat was a wealthy Moroccan merchant, who lived in Sudan for 14 years, told him that he had collected a fortune of up to 100,000 dinars, about 425 kilograms of gold. Malfante was not just a merchant, he also collected allot of information about Touat⁷, gold trading and all about trans-Saharan Trade, and then he sent it with commercial convoys to his home country. This

⁴ Ibid, p 65.

⁵ * Ahmed ben Yahya, Al-ancharisi, Al Mi'yar Al Mu'arab wa Al-djami' Al-Mugharab 'an Fatawa Ahel Ifrikyia wa-Alandalus wa Al-Maghreb, (The Kingdom of Morocco: The Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, 1981), Prt II, p. 214.

* See Also, Fawzi, Abdullah, Yahoud Al-Djaza'ir Ha'oula'i Al-Madjhouloun, Print 2, (Algeria: Dar Al Umma, 2004), P 67.

⁶ Abdu R-rahman, Ibn Khaldoun, Al-Ibar,(Dar Al-Fikr Print). Part VII. P.77.

⁷ Niyani, G.T and others, The General History of Africa, Volume IV (Arca from 12 C to 16). (Beirut: UNESCO, Catholic Print, 1983), Part II, P133- 134.

is the best evidence of the regularity of commercial convoys. As an example, the letter written in Latin in 1447 by the Italian Antonio Malfante from 'Tueto' to a merchant in Genoa. Malfante describes a village which is believed to be Tamentit:

This locality is a mart of the country of the Moors, to which merchants come to sell their goods: gold is carried hither, and bought by those who come up from the coast. This place is De Amament [Tamentit], and there are many rich men here. The generality, however, are very poor, for they do not sow, nor do they harvest anything, save the dates upon which they subsist. They eat no meat but that of castrated camels, which are scarce and very dear." He also comments on the Jewish population: "There are many Jews, who lead a good life here, for they are under the protection of the several rulers, each of whom defends his own clients. Thus they enjoy very secure social standing. Trade is in their hands, and many of them are to be trusted with the greatest confidence."⁸

It was not only Malfante who pointed out this importance, but also other travelers who visited the area; including the famous geographer El-Hassan El-Wazzan when he visited Touat in 917 AH / 1511, while talking about Tengorarin in his book "Describing Africa" describes its people as rich, they go with their goods heavily to the Sudan. Then he said that in Touat the Berber convoys meet with the merchants of Sudan, there are big markets there ... He pointed also some commodities that are popular like meat ..., and that their prices are high. So they buy camel meat and salted meat, which comes from merchants of Persia and Tlemcen, and they get huge profits.⁹

Abu Salem al-Ayashi, also took the path of Touat in his journey to Hajj. Although there is a road in the same level to the north, closer to the road of Touat, but he preferred this latter with his country's pilgrims; since it provides regular stations, water sources and meadows and numerous oases on the way to rest, which are essential for passengers.¹⁰ Al-Ayashi describes the commercial life of the region during the AH 11th / AD 1772 / AD 1661 as a prosperous year, and that the people of Tsabit, one of the Touat' k'surs, are the owners of

⁸ Crone, G.R., , *The Voyages of Cadamosto and other documents on Western Africa in the second half of the fifteenth century*, (London: Hakluyt Society ed. 1937).

⁹ Al-Hassan, bin Mohammed Al-Wazzan (Lion of Africa): *Description of Africa, Part II*, translated by Mohammed Haji, and Mohammed al-Akhdar, second edition,(Beirut: Lebanon, Dar al-Gharb al-Islami, 1983), Part II, p. 133-134.

¹⁰ Moulay, Belhamisi, *Algeria Through the Journeys of Moroccans in the Ottoman Period*, 2nd edition, (Algiers: National Publishing and Distribution Company, 1981, p. 25.

trade, and it is the caravan assemblage from Sudan. There are large markets for commercial convoys.¹¹

In the 19th century, Barth said that Touat, with its natural extension to the north-west of Tafilalet and Seljmassa, constituted the natural bridge between its fertile northern lands. When it comes to Timbuktu and Walatah, the whole region is a large commercial reservoir, as traders have been working to establish exchanges between the various centers.¹² Mersher says in a report entitled "The Mission of Ghadames": "If we look at the map of Africa we can see that the natural route of Algeria towards the Sudan passes through the archipelago of the Touat oases, whether the destination is Timbuktu or Kano or any commercial center in the Hausa country. This road has been very active since the Middle Ages".¹³

In the same vein, Paul Solley, in a report to the French Chamber of Commerce in Algeria in 1874, quoted the special location of the oases especially Ain-Saleh:

If we measure the distance between the Grand Touat and the commercial centers in its four main regions, they are astonishingly equal; the distance between it and Algeria from the north is the same to Timbuktu to the south, and the distance between it and Tripoli to the east is equal to the distance between it and Mogdour to the west. So this site contributed greatly to the area of Touat not only a commercial center, but an important transit point for trans-Saharan trade convoys in both directions.¹⁴

ii. Reasons behind Convoys Passing Through the Touat Desert and the Leading Roads

There are many factors that made Touat as a flourished territory in the Trans-Saharan commercial caravan trade; that is what has attracted many merchants and craftsmen as well as travelers and pilgrims.

First, its geographical location in the middle of the desert, which links it to various directions; North, South, East and West, what enabling it to be the focal point in the African Trans-Saharan Trade. Then, the presence of water in a dry area, surrounded by a strain of sand

¹¹ Abdullah bin Mohammed al-Ayashi: *Ar-Rihla Al-Ayyashiyah 1661-1663*, Part 1, investigating by Saeed Al-Fadhli and Sulaiman Al-Qurashi, First Edition, (United Arabia, Emirates: Dar Al-Suwaidi for Publishing and Distribution, 2006), Part I, pp 80-81.

¹² Henri, Barth (1821 – 1865), *Voyages et découvertes dans l'Afrique septentrionale et centrale pendant années 1849 à 1855*, (Paris, Bruxelles, 1863), p 109.

¹³ Paul, Solleillet : *D'Alger à L'Oasis d'In-Salah*, Rapport présenté à la chambre de commerce d'Alger, Jourdan, Alger, 1875, p14- 15.

¹⁴ Al-Hassan bin Mohammed Al-Wazzan. *Op. cit.* p. 135.

dunes makes it impossible to be passed without it. What draws people to it, its plenty of K'sur spread across a wide geographical area, in where they could find some shadow to take a rest. Moreover, the kindness of its inhabitants which provides traders and travelers a suitable environment and a calm atmosphere. There is also a large population and diversity of their species, which provides traders with a wide consumer market.

Mainly because of security, especially for foreigners, guests find all respect and care. And the best proof of that; the case of the South-Italian merchant who stayed for two years, and then returned back home safely and unharmed. Al-Hasan al-Wazan confirms this by saying about the people of Touat saying: "They often fight among themselves and become arrogant, but they do not touch strangers with evil."¹⁵

Then, the presence of a large number of traders and the proliferation of commercial activity among the population, according to some sources; in Timbuktu in 1287 AH / 1870 there were approximately 600 Touatian merchant and 25 merchants from Tfilalet.¹⁶

Its' wide commercial network roads connect the area to the rest of the regions, making it a leading to all countries and regions. Most of these routes are dry valleys, which have water springs and foggaras for desert passersby, with solid dust, which helps to walk. There are easy-to-follow landmarks as well as guiders, whom were provided to the convoy by the locals. The trees also grow on the edges of it provide the types of dates, and some herbs for feeding camels and sheep.

For a long period of time, Touat is connected to a commercial network routes from different directions, of which end to commercial markets and cities in various locations. The most vibrant and active rout is "Touat-Timbuktu" passing through Regan towards Hassi Hasdah, then Hassi Al Bouz, Al Malih, Reqla, Bir Al Thahab, Tansir, Sabtay, Tartakia, Ndkuir, Taoudani and Timbuktu. Then the Tuat-Gao road, which starts from Akebli in Touat, M'eragen, Alen, Tanzerfet, Al Burj, Hassi Paktlis, Tsalit, Akahok, Anafif, Tabarchat, Tabnkurt, Tnkara, Bouragan and to Gawa. In Alen there is another sub-route of through The Four Hundred, Tadjnout, Ashurad Shabi, then Anafis to Amahor.¹⁷

¹⁵ Ibid, p. 134.

¹⁶ Mohammed, A'fif, A Contribution to the Study of Social and Political History of the Southwest oases Touat in the 19th Century, Thesis of the Diploma of Postgraduate Studies in History, Supervised by Professor Hurman Ayyash,(Rabat, History Department, Faculty of Arts and Humanities, Mohammed V University, 1982), p.143.

¹⁷ Mohammed, Houtiya; Touat and the Commercial Caravans, Convoy Road, (Batna, Algeria: Publications of the National Research Center in Prehistoric Times, Ammar Qurfi Press, 2001), p. 35.

Touat-Timbuktu via Akbili flourished until the nineteenth century, mainly historical sources have pointed it out in some details. It starts from Akebli in Aoulef, the first station comes after two stages: the "Tin Tini" and the "Allen". Days later, the convoys enter the Desert of Tranzofet, a flat barren area, followed by Anganan. After six stages, the caravans arrive at Al Mabrouk, then the Al Mamoun, Boudjbiha, Arouan, Aghouzan, and after three stages reach Timbuktu.¹⁸

The road of "Ain Saleh Timbuktu" starts from Inger, Tit, Aqbali, Zaouiet Héinoun, and then Malh, Shibli, Timadanin, the last point in Tuat. After that, Hassi Tiabin, Walen Ain Ranan in the desert of Tranzofet, Al Mabrouk, ... to Timbuktu.

To the north, a road divided into two parts; the first is from Touat via Igli, Figuig, Ain al-Safra, Meshriya, Al-Kheither, Arzio to Oran. The second section starts from Touat via Aqbali, Ain Salih, Wadi Mizab, Laghouat, Medea, Blida and then Algeria. In Mizab, it meets with the road of Ouargla through Biskra, Batna and Constantine to Skikda. This road has another branch that runs from Touat across Timimon, Mizab and meets the first route to Algeria. Sheikh Abd al-Rahman Ibn Idris ibn Umar al-Tanlani took his journey towards the city of Algiers in 1231 AH / 1815.¹⁹

Another road starts from Touat across Tabelkouza, Al Mankeb, Labiyah Sidi Sheikh where the first road is met.

To the west, there are several roads, each of which leads to the largest West African cities, a road from Touat through Igli, passing Umm Dribina, Kasabah Al Makhzen, and then Meknes to Fez. Another road starts from Touat across Igli, but crosses Figuigue towards Saldjamssah, then Tafilalet to Fez. Finally, Touat route via Tabelbala, Kasbah Tunzulin, and then Oued Deraa towards Marrakech.

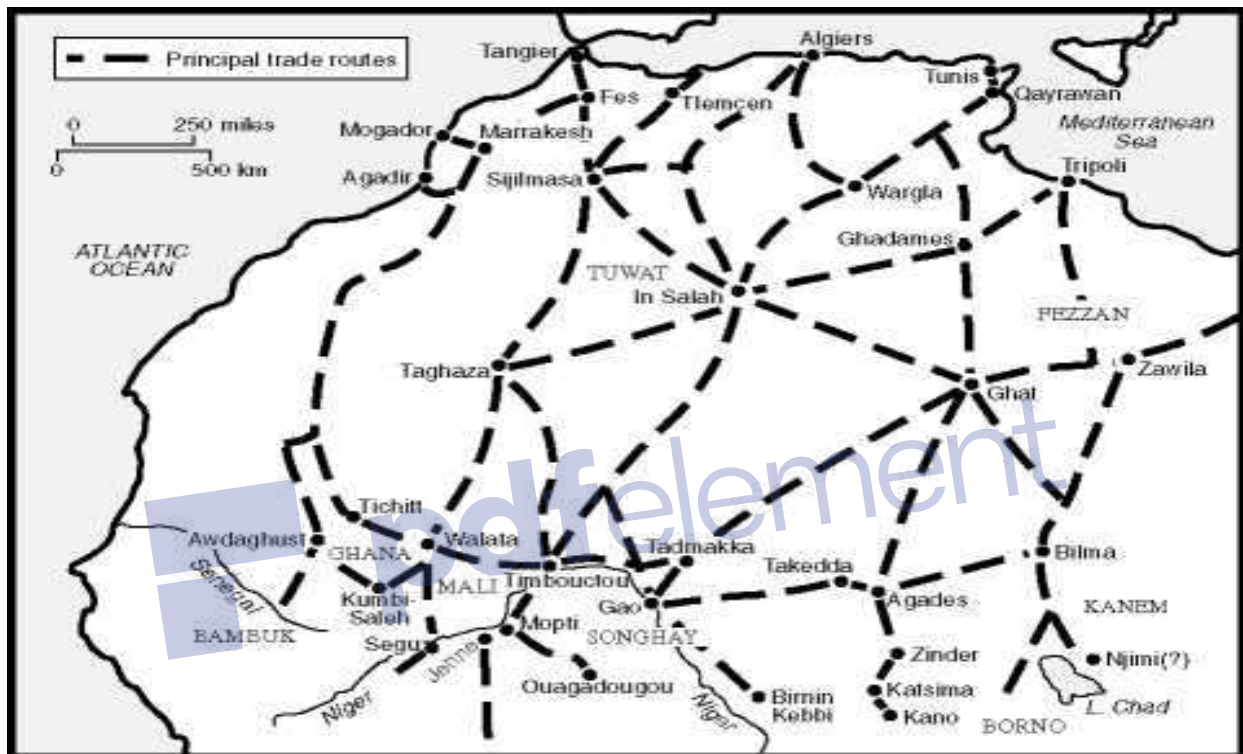
Towards the east, many roads and branches, it is noteworthy that they are vital and active. The first road is from Touat via Arselmen, 'Zibah, Lemsegam, Albid, Tinghin, Gh'dames, Tripoly to Berka. Then, the second route is via Ghost in Ih Salah, Ghouzi, Oulid Messaoud to Arselmen, in where it meets the First road toward Gh'dames. The third one, from Touat via Tindja'ken, Amsarah, Gharis, Amghida, Antefous, Kheldjgham, Tarsit, Areknira, Aidou, Fayout, Ghat untill Fezzan.

¹⁸ James, Richardson, (1806-1851) : Routes du Sahara Itinéraire dans l'intérieur du Grand Désert d'Afrique, (Paris : Imprimerie de L. Martinet, 1850), pp. 8-10.

¹⁹ Abdel Rahman, Ben Idris Tinilani: Journey to Algeria, Manuscript, (Adrar, Algeria: Tennilane Bookcase of manuscripts.)

Finally, one of the main route in the region is the Hajj Road; the artery of movement, since it links Touat' regions with Fez and Tafilalet from the western side, meets with the route of pilgrims coming from western Sudan. It is divided into two ways; the first through Ain Saleh, Ghadames, Berqa, Alexandria towards The Holy Mekaa, while the other one starts from T'sabit, Ougrout, Meniaa, Oued Mizab, Ouargla towrd Gh'dames. This arduous journey may take a year or more, because it is too long and its cuved pathways (see Map: 04.)

Map: 04. The commercial network routes.



Source : <http://www.worldhistory.biz/uploads/posts/2015-08/345w-162.jpg> (Access on Mai 23, 2018)

We can note from the above that the area of Touat is situated in the middle of four major commercial Trans-Saharan cities in different directions, almost equal in the distance between them. The city of Ghadames, on the east side, has a distance of about twenty-seven days between it and Touat, the gateway to the East, and from it to the largest commercial markets in Asia. Then, in the west, the city of Fez; a march of thirty-two days between it and Touat. On the northern side, the city of Algiers, which is about thirty days away, and from there to the coastal cities. The city of Timbuktu in the South, which is the gateway to Africa, a march of twenty-nine days from Aqballi. Knowing that the total distance of Touat, from Tabelucza in the north to Ain Saleh in the south, is approximately twenty four days.

iii. Markets and commodities

Touat was famous, for centuries, by the activeness of its markets spread across its regions.

The Tamantite market was the biggest in the commercial's goods exchanging in the region because it has been the capital of Touat for centuries. Historians and travelers have been mentioned it in their writings, among of them Ibn Khaldunin in his "Intoduction". Souk Bouda, no less important than his predecessor, Ibn Battuta visited it in his famous journey, is considered one of the oldest commercial markets to this day. Also, Tigourarin Market, Ougrout, Tassabit one also mentioned by Al Ayachi, Timmi till Ain Salah; are different markets with several motives.²⁰

Dumas states that in Touat there are multiple markets, each dedicated to a certain commodity. There is a market for sheep, meat, lamb and butter, another for camel and horse saddle, a cloth market, crafts, while another market for slaves, a market for perfume and a tobacco market (see Map. 05.)

Map: 05; Trans-Saharan trade route



Source: <https://i.pinimg.com/originals/d0/10/61/d01061170a98edcab1e31f77fac51e5c.jpg> (Access on Mai 23, 2018)

Concerning commodities, Al Ayachi pointed out that there is a great vogue for many kinds of goods, such as horses, camels, cattle, clothing, silk and Carpets of several kinds. As

²⁰ Abdullah, bin Mohammed al-Ayashi: *ibid*, Part I, pp 80-81.

for Hadjj, passengers and traders used to supply there caravans by; dates and gold from Touat because of the price of it. Lanze²¹ says that the Touatian trade convoys come to Timbuktu with dates and tobacco, and return back with gold and slaves, ostrich feathers and ivory.²² Rohlf's confirms that the convoys coming from Western Sudan are usually crowded with about six hundred or seven hundred slaves, and about fifty pounds of "tiber" (*The "tiber" Arabic*) is what is known as gold sand or gold powder, because it is the material that is extracted, and is full of impurities.), and quantities of ostrich feathers and ivory.

In addition, there are equally important items that are popular among Touatian chikhs and scholars, such as books and manuscripts. The trade in manuscript books flourished during these periods because, as elsewhere in the *Umma*, the Muslim societies across the region valued scholarship and were intent upon instilling proper religious practice grounded in the canonical texts (the books of the *Su'nah* and *Fiqh*). Moreover, literate elites in these societies did not only collect imported books. They authored their own works: chronicles, commentaries, legal arguments, poetry, etc., which also circulated, as shown by several authors in this work.

iv. **The Consequences of the socio-cultural exchanges and their Influence on the Touatians**

The trade of exchanges has contributed to the development and construction, at various levels, of the Touat region throughout ages, making it a distinct metropolis of the great Saharan cities; economically, socio-cultural and scientifically.

Economically, the contribution of traders, in many aspects, helped in forming a vast exchange and monetary profits. Also, the vogue of the slave trade led to the abundance of labor. They were used by the owners in digging the foggaras, which are the vein of life in a dry area, and in cultivating the orchards, as well as some crafts and buildings, ...etc The oases and agricultural areas had extremely expanded, what increased agricultural and economic investment in the region. The Economic activity in the region gave rise to a wide social mobility, in which the tribes of different races stabilized in it. Thus, many customs and traditions have moved with these tribes which contributed in bringing different cultures. Furthermore, the caravan trade led to a wide scientific movement, both inside and outside the region, since convoys were often carrying books and manuscripts, which have been a commercial vogue in those ages, brings much better profits than some goods.²³ In addition, some

²¹ (*Oskar Lenz (April 13, 1848 – March 1, 1925) was a German-Austrian geologist and mineralogist born in Leipzig.*)

²² Oskar, Lenze (1848-1925) : Tomboctou Voyage au Maroc au Sahara et au Soudan, (Libererie Hachette, Paris, 1887), p 167.

²³ Al Hassan, Al wazzan, *ibid*, PP 167.

traders have acquired a wide scientific culture, which qualified them for other roles besides their commercial transactions, or so-called trade scholars. Those whom were the ones who preferred to work in trade because it earns more profits, instead of teaching and the judiciary. They continued to practice their intellectual activity out of commerce, and exceeded their scientific influence, in some cases, more than those who were devoted to science. Due to those who devoted their lives to science, the Africans got to know many of the most prominent merchants of Islamic jurisprudence, such as Chikh Al Haji Muhammad Fatha Ibn Abi Muhammad al-Imraini al-Touati (d. 1008 AH / 1600); who studied in Fez and rejected the post of judiciary after his famous saying: "God holds me accountable about thousand of Qintar (a great amount of wealth), preferable then to ask me about an issue between two."²⁴ Some merchants had Zawiya and schools, and follow a special Soufi' method of education, which they built and spent their own money for science. Among of them, Sheikh Sidi Ali bin Hanini (d. 1115 AH / 1703); the owner of the famous Zawiya of Zaglou, till nowadays, who owned a commercial convoy arrived about nine hundreds of camel trading in Sudan, and its profits were spent on the students of his Zahouia of Qur'an and passers-by, in Touat and others.

Broadly speaking, the African Trans-Saharan trade caravans served to tie the bonds of communication between Touat and various cities, especially Western Sudan. Touatian traders became known in other markets, even they have houses and districts. The best example is the letter sent by The King of Songhay, Sultan Berno (Kandy Ould Jamshash), to the tribal sheikhs and their brothers in Taut; which is a manuscript document found by Officer Marathan in Touat, dated 843 AH / 1440, he says:

...Surprisingly, how did you leave your ancestors' habit and not come to our country? Since the treaty concluded with our Master Sultan Sanqara,- I swear by God - I did not and will not cause you any kind of trouble or harm. Come as usual, and no one will come from Touat carrying a message from you, have to pay taxes, because the country is yours, just like your predecessors.²⁵

The reader to this document can discern to what extent the Touatians have attained their position in Africa, and how kings and princes offered them the greatest motivations and support to urge them to come to Sudan.

Conclusion

From the above, we conclude that due to the trans-Saharan trade' convoys, the area of Touat had flourished in various respects; economically, socially and cultural diversity, as well as the scientific field.

²⁴ Muhammad, ibn Abd al-Karim, ibn Abd al-Haq al-Tamentaiti: *Jawharat al-Maani fi Taarif Oulamaa Al Alf A'Tani*, manuscript, (Bookcase of manuscripts Kousam, Adrar Algeria), p 50.

²⁵ Paul Marty: *Kounta al-Sharqia, Arabization of Mohamed Mahmoud Weddady*, (Zaid ibn Thabit Press, Damascus, Syria, 1985), pp. 34-35.

Chapter Three:

The Golden Ages and the decline of the Trans-Saharan Trade

Introduction

In certain moments, many serious motives pushed people to cross, or even to settle in the region. These are the same reasons that made foreign powers to try to make full dominance on the territory.

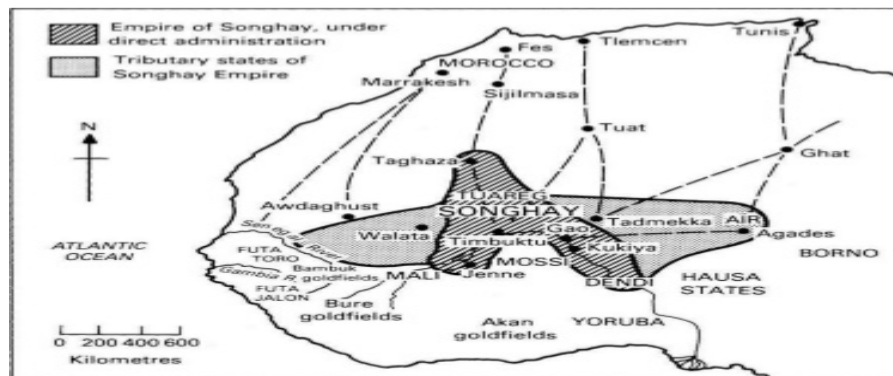
In this chapter we will illustrate the chronological and historical invasions up on the region, and how did the traditional trans-Saharan caravan trade declined.

i. The Race towards Hegemony and Decline of trans-Saharan trade

With a broader view, by the beginning of the 15th century, the nature and role of trans-Saharan trade had shifted and reshaped under the new circumstances beyond control, which created by a worldwide oceanic trade. The European naval powers namely; Portugal, Spain, England, the Netherlands and France, about to fight in a fierce competition on the mercantilist system. These super powers attempted to monopolize trade over specific seas and coasts through a network of overseas "factories", or trading centers managed by company agents. Eventually, the new maritime system had made a full control on the traditional Trans-Saharan caravan' trade. The Portuguese, through the Strait of Gibraltar, initiated Europe's overseas crawl by take control of Ceuta (Sebta), on the Strait of Gibraltar, in 1415. They established forts and trading posts on the island of Arguin, off the Sahara coast, and another at Elmina "Elmina Castle", along what will become the "Gold Cost" (Ghana), in 1482. Moreover, and other smaller ones besides, where they intended to take control onto West Africa's gold and slave market, in an attempt to stimulate purchase of gold there.

Unable to drive out the Portuguese from its Atlantic ports, the Moroccan Sultan Ahmed al-Mansur (reigned 1578- 1603) sent his army south, defeating the forces of Songhai Empire in 1590-92.¹ Seemingly, the hidden cause for this war was controlling over the mid-Saharan oases of Touat markets and the Taghàza salt mines, but it is clear that the underlying issue was Morocco's drive domination on the gold and slave trade. After defeating The Songhay Empire, Ahmed al-Mansur added the title "al-Dhahbi" (The Golden) to his name (see Map. 06).²

Map: 06; The Songhai Empire



Songhai Empire

Source: <https://image.slidesharecdn.com/4songhaiempiretothe21stc-140730221348-phpapp02/95/4-songhai-empire-to-the-21st-century-su2014-8-638.jpg?cb=1406758542> (Access on Mai 24, 2018).

According to Koninklijke Brill, the Moroccan conquest of Songhay, despite the fact that it was of only short term benefit to the Moroccans, marks a major turning point in the history of the region. First of all, the event closes the era of great territorial empires, both north and south of the Sahara. Then, in order to completely subjugate Songhai and the hole region. Also, abusing and exiling the independently minded scholars of Timuktu in particular and intellectual leaders, including Ahmed Baba. Moreover, The Moroccan authority confiscated Timbuktu's famous libraries and book, and scholars were taken to Marrakesh.³

Between the 17TH to 18TH C, slave trade became a dominated phenomenon in the African trans-Saharan caravan trade during the era of gold. The Saàdians dynasty involved in slavery by the early 16th C, they established a sugar industry in the southern Morocco; Sous, Chichaoua, Essaouria and Haouz based on irrigation and slave labour. For these reasons, the

¹ Ismael Diadié-Haidara, Jawdar Pasha et la conquête Sadiennes du Songhay, 1591- 1599, Rabat ; Institut des Etudes Africaines, 1996.

² Koninklijke , Brill. The Trans-Saharan Book Trade (BOSTON: Manuscript Culture, Arabic literacy and Intellectual History in Muslim Africa, Edited by Graziano Kratli and Ghislaine Lydon, LEIDE2011)., , P 23.

³ Koninklijke , Brill. Ibid, 23_24

supplying of slaves from sub-Saharan Africa became an authentic need matter. So, the Moroccan Kings used to urge scholars in the exile to write treaties and used them as a pretext to subjugate human being under the law. For instance, Ahmed Baba, in his exile in Marrakesh, was driven to write a treatise, entitled "Mi'raj al-su'ud", spelling out the illicit condition under these slaves were brought. After a period of time, the sugar policy had failed since the Portuguese begun to produce cheaper one in Brazil, and this undersell Moroccan sugar in the European market. As a result, Morocco's sugar production collapsed, as did the dynasty itself, in the early 17TH century.

The slump of Morocco's sugar industry did not, however, a reason for the end of the trans-Saharan trade in slaves. By creating a slave-based army and civil service, 'Alawi dynasty had reestablished a centralized state in Morocco and had decided to modernize it on the Ottoman Janissary model in the 1660s. First who enslaved the black populations in Morocco's Saharan oases, whom were called Haratin locally and descendent from the Sahara's Neolithic-era inhabitants, whom was already of slave status and was principally employed in agriculture is Sultan Moulay Ismail (reigned 1672-1727). Even though these Haratin were Muslims, but they became slaves of the sultan and were moved to the capital. When the religious scholars in Fez criticized this policy, Moulay Ismail set about purchasing sub-Saharan slave boys instead to the Hasani tribes of "Lands of Shinqit" (i.e., the Mauritanian Adrar). These tribes then either engaged in slave trade in Sahelian areas directly, or else purchased them at the emporia there. Especially in the emirates of Brakna, Trarza and Tagant, which were allied with Moroccans. Moroccan armies intervened directly in these emirates, and even further south in the Senegal valley, in support of this policy. The Moroccan kingdom also bought directly from the slave market in Timbuktu, which was still nominally under its sovereignty. A slave army whose members were affiliated neither to domestic tribe nor to home province was regarded to be faithful only to the sultan and the central state. In the end, though, the 'Alawi slave army proved a failure. After Moulay Ismail's death, his sons fought for the throne and the new slave army which became powerfull in the ensuing civil wars, or like what our ancestors had toled "Harb el-Goum"⁴. The cultural legacy of Moulay Ismail's slave policy is evident today in the sub-Saharan cultic and musical practices of several Moroccan Sufi groups: Gnawa, the Aisawa..., and in Touat, Karcabou, Baroud, Ahallil, T'bal and Habra...⁵

⁴ Harb el-Goum: *El-Goum* in Arabic means *the folk*.

⁵ Koninklijke , Brill. Ibid.

ii. Trans-Saharan trade and the Transatlantic slave trade between the West Africa, Europe and the New World

The Trans-Saharan trade as well as the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade made up a significant part of the African history, between 1450 and 1900. However the lack of historical evidence occurs out of nothing and it is, therefore, vital to scrutinize the circumstances in which it developed.

In fact, two trade disputes raised and differed strikingly to discern whether the Trans-Saharan trade was a key in the development of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade. The first one is that, the Trans-Atlantic slave trade was overwhelmingly an effect of European interference and built around pre-existing forms of slavery and internal trade within the Africans themselves. Hence, it is insufficient in explaining the relationship between the Trans-Atlantic slave trade and the Trans-Saharan trade.

On the other hand, many substantiation proofs which highlight, in several dimensions, that the Trans-Atlantic slave trade could not have been if it did not exist in wide commercial networks. And furthermore, the demand for goods and slaves as a result of the Trans-Saharan trade.

iii. The French Greed in the Algerian Sahara and the Decline of Trans-Saharan Trade

The trans-Saharan trade is the real motivation for France's occupation of the Algerian Sahara, as a bridge to its other African colonies. This is due to the urgent economic needs of the France and its policy towards its colonies.

After the practice of the slave trade on the coast of the Atlantic for nearly two centuries, and the development of industrial revolution, the demands of the European economy has changed from labor to land products and to the disposal of their products. The prohibition of slave trade was closely related to the new economic policy across the seas and the Sahara. In addition, the fierce competition over the desert trade between Britain and France. France quickly occupied Algeria, and then exploited all scientific, cultural, political, military, economic and even social means to achieve its desired goal of transferring its trade between the shores of the Mediterranean and the Atlantic Ocean through the Algerian Sahara. Finally, France had what wanted by the beginning of the twentieth century, where the region has undergone transformations in the field of traditional trade.

If we go back through chronological and historical events, which make us admit that the real reason for French' occupation of Algeria is the trans-Saharan trade, by which they could take full control on the commercial network. After the impossibility of the French invasion to the Ottoman Empire, by the beginning of the modern era, they managed to participate in the trans-Saharan trade. They changed their policy to the Atlantic Ocean to the participation of European countries in the process of exploration and exploitation, slave trade was practiced by the French for nearly two centuries with Europe and the New World.

By the end of the 18th century, a radical changes appeared by the Industrial Revolution, by which the economical demands switched up from labour to the land products' commodities. Then, looking for markets for the Colonizer's products. On the other hand, the abolishment of slave trade had a strategical policy with the new economic shift. In the meantime, and synchronically with the retrogression of the Ottoman Empire, the Great Britain started abolishing slave trade and piracy over the Mediterranean. Subsequently, a fierce competition between the British and the French on the Libyan Desert since it is a gateway to the trans-Saharan trade. This is what made France rush to occupy Algeria. Shortly after its occupation of Algeria, it quickly set up an exploratory committee in 1837 to collect in-depth and accurate information about the Sahara to study desert trade, all in order to compete with its neighbor Britain in trans-Saharan trade.

In its first step, the French authority made efforts in order to study the trans-Saharan trade to deviate trade from Ghat and Ghadames to Algeria, where Carette presented two studies in which he highlighted the commercial importance of Algerian Sahara. In 1845 Eugène Daumas published a book entitled "The Algerian Sahara", in which he presented a study on the progress made by the French in their knowledge of the Sahara during that time. He also spoke about efforts to obtain as much information as possible about these desert areas before its penetration. He also emphasized the importance of trade in the south, so it would be a must to move south to expand trade influence into the interior of Africa. In addition to the studies presented, several researches have raised in this regard. The most important of these is the work of Bodichon, who envisioned the importance of the project linking Algeria and Timbuktu, considering that the people of the south are in dire need of foodstuffs from the north. Moreover, the possibility of opening the desert road, and even transit to the country of Sudan. This is what enables France to make the Algerian ports an outlet for African trade, and its oases as transit centers. Sudan also represents a huge consumer power estimated at 20 million population, and will become a wide market for French industry.

In 1855, the Geographical Society in Paris offered an amount of 6,000 francs for anyone traveling on an expedition from Algeria to Senegal or vice versa, provided that he should pass through Timbuktu and provides accurate information on the organization of convoys, routes, natural and water resources, major commercial centers and their commodities and prices. They also emphasized their interest in the cultural aspect of these societies for colonial purposes. Among the travelers who were employed in this field; the traveler Bonman François Louis, commissioned by the Governor General of Algeria Jacques Louis Randon to make a trip to Ghadames in 1856 in order to know the prices of products, as consequence to estimate the colonizer's prices of their products during trade. This journey brought valuable results, pushing France to send two other travellers to Ghadames later, such as Duveyrier, in order to scrutinize the social structure, religious, cultural and mentality of its inhabitants.⁶

The information gathered about the main leaders of the Tuareg and the inhabitants of Ghadames and their rulers was keen on opening trade relations with the Algerian France. This was manifested in the recall of the religious Tuareg leader Sheikh Othman to visit the capital and Constantine during the reign of Marshal Randon. And again during the reign of Marshal Duke Domalakov Beesley to visit the capital and Paris, and after influencing him accepted he and Sheikh Ikhnoukhen, where the Treaty was signed instead of their peoples.

Flatters' travel also revealed France's interest in the commercial side. After a series of exploratory missions to the desert, represented by French officers and adventurers, and some Algerian traitors such as Ismail Boudraba, Haji Abdelkaderi Bakr Touati, El-Hajj El-Bashir, etc., emerged the idea of extending a railway through the Sahara in the 1860s, to gain the time that convoys took in their journey. France planned to extend three railways: the eastern one through Ghadames, the middle through Ouargla and M'giden to Niger or Lake Chad, and the western line through Touat. Flatters' voyage and his crew came in response to this, but his persecution by Tuareg al-Ahrar stopped the crawl towards Touareg.

After the Berlin Conference of 1885 until 1914, these regions witnessed a large movement in the exploratory and military area of Southern Algeria, West and Central Africa, in order to link its colonies with each other.

By the turn of the twentieth century, control of the two banks of the Sahara had been tightened. In 1904, France established a large colonial area in West Africa called "French West

أ. دعاشي، سميرة، مداخلة بعنوان: التجارة الفرنسية عبر الصحراء الجزائرية ودورها في تراجع التجارة التقليدية (1900 – 1945م)، (جامعة محمد دباغين، صطيف 02)، ص3.

Africa". The latter comprises Senegal, Mauritania, Mali, Upper Volta, Niger, Guinea and Ivory Coast (Cote d'Ivoire), and Dakar and its economic metropolis. But after its full occupation of Algeria and West, They began to connect the desert with paved roads instead of iron railway because it costs high. As a result of the development of aeronautics, the rest of Africa has been linked by air, land and sea.

France pursued a policy of concluding treaties and agreements with Saharian and Tuareg tribal leaders, as well as African leaders, in order to create the commercial ground, as the agreement with the leader of the Aznar tribe Ikh'nukhan. The most important items of these agreements; to establish friendship and trade between the French authorities and tribal leaders by opening roads to the French merchants to Sudan, identifying the ports and controlling them, repairing the wells and removing all obstacles to french business activity. After the occupation of these areas, France sought to grant the French colonial companies wide concessions to land ownership, after the Berlin Conference five years. As for the desert of Algeria, the palm trees and its production, especially Deglet Nore, which has a great commercial vogue in the European markets. Thus, desert agriculture became the main activity of the French. Capitalism began to own palm trees, which in 1950 reached more than 160,000 palm trees distributed to colonial peasant companies.⁷

These properties soon diminished the African peasants and producers, so that their production became incapable of competition, pushing them only to work on the farms of those colonial companies. They are forced to do so, because the administration provides agricultural labor to these companies by forcing labor exploitation.

After taking control, France was able to turn Africa into a large commercial market to sell its products that had been extracted from.

⁷ Ibid. P. 08

As a **conclusion**, The Portuguese voyages through the African coast discovered new gateway for trade between West Africa and Europe. They built forts and market as European trading bases, factories were established, and trade with the Europeans became more profitable to West African traders. Since the Northern Africa had declined in both political and economic values, while the Saharan routes sustained long and mysterious. However, the knockdown to trans-Saharan trade was The Moroccan ferocious campaign across the Sahara attacking Touat, Timbuktu, Gao and some other important trading centers, destroying buildings and property and subjected and enslaving indigenous citizens. This penetration led to the disturbance of trade dynamic. Moreover, a dramatic and a serious devastate in the importance of these towns and, as a result, terrible security instability reduced trade extremely. Although much devastation that reduced the trans-Saharan trade, however some caravans continued their journeys seeking for commercial transactions. After the French invasion of the West Africa and subsequent the planning for the construction of railways to the interior, a railway line from Algiers to Dakar via Touat - Niger was planned but never constructed, trade routes became increasingly easy but for the colonial profit. By the independence of the African nations in the 1960s, unfortunately the colonizers left the regions limited by national boundaries. National governments were hostile to each other and to Tuareg nationalism and so made few efforts to maintain and flourish trans-Saharan trade, the Tuareg Rebellion of the 1990s and Algerian Black Decade further disrupted routes, and many hallways closed. Many traditional caravan routes are largely void of camels, but others are still regularly, if rarely, used. For centuries, the region was safe, active and profitable until the Moroccan followed by the French colonization; the trans-Saharan trade had declined. To stimulate the trans-Saharan trade, it should give a rebirth and renew its routes.

General Conclusion

For a long period of time,, Touat seemed a remarkable commercial activity, since it was a focal point in the African trans-Saharan trade. Because of its strategic geographical position, security, its market and its commodities, and the generosity of its people, it played an important role in attracting merchants, travellers and even scholars to make profitable affairs, or even, settle there.

Due to the mutual contacts between traders, and even, scholars with the locals, a vast exchange was made in many aspects of life; commercial as well as socio-cultural. The period between the 15th to the 19th centuries is one of the most important historical periods in the region, which represented the moments in which seemed scientific renaissance during a certain era, due to the efforts of the foreign scientists and the scholars of the region who were educated by them and were the best creation for good ancestor.

Despite the fact that the region of Touat is harsh with a dry climate and difficult natural conditions, it has been inhabited since ancient times, and this may be due to several reasons, including:

- Since their early history, the people of Touat have benefited from the location of their region, which is in the middle of the Sahara trade, linking the markets of the north of the Islamic Maghreb with the markets of Sudan through their trade convoys, where it was a axis point in the trade process and pilgrims.
- This region was independent in its rule during this period, away from the political conflicts that existed in the Islamic Maghreb, due to its geographic dimension, what made it the refuge of scholars, some jurists and fugitives from political abuse.
- Availability of water in the region; wells and groundwater due to the system of watering the foggara, that is what made it crowded with people.
- The region still has several public utilities, including mosques and Zaouiyas, which provide safe places to rest and accommodation of passers-by, pilgrims and students. Moreover, it has special funds "waqf" to finance them.
- One of the main factors that brought Touat out of its isolation in the deep desert is the availability of markets in it. The diverse human structure in this region has also made the

consumer market more and more extensive, and thus the diversity of products and the great competition for their supply in the region.

- The interest of its people in science and scientists and the attempt to communicate with them, which made some of them take on the task of spreading science and Islam in the Sahara.
- This period was characterized by Sufism because of the spread of the zaouiya that are active in the region. Due to the efforts of sheikhs such as Sheikh Zeglawi and Sheikh Abdul-Karim Almaghili; who introduced the method of Qadiriya to Touat, and worked to disseminate it in the Western Sudan. Zaouiyas took the task of teaching, which spread widely in the region until almost every g'sar has one for education and accommodation.

These conclusions, which I have reached through this research, are a very small part of the area of the Touat region, which is not fair to historical writings. We are required, at least, to study the history of this region, which was praised by historians and ancient scholars. Its history is a part of the collective and National memory of the history of Algeria.

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MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION AND SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

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MASTER II IN:

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Dissertation to obtain Master's degree



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The Role of Touat in the African Trans-Saharan Caravan Trade

(15 C to 19 C)

SUBMITTED BY

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Examiner: Dr. Ghermaoui Amel



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MOTIVATION

First of all, I am from Adrar, and Touat contained the whole region, which was very important, unfortunately, it did not get its publicity to unveil its importance in the past.

Also, I decided to tackle with this theme to stimulate others to know about Touat, and may be it will give further future-visions to the region.

Furthermore, as a result of this research, I hope for a future outlook by giving a revival for these routes, for the sake-of the resuscitation of the trans-Saharan trade, since it would flourishes various aspects of life; to the region, as well as, other countries.

Research Questions

- Did Touat contributed in spreading Arabic/Muslim culture?
- If so, how important was Touat in spreading such culture to the neighbor countries?

Hypotheses

- My be Touatians sprad their culture through commerce and scholars.
- My be Touat was a reason behind in spreading Islam in the neighboring countries.

General Introduction

Touat is one of the oldest provinces in the Sahara, which had a notable role in commercial transactions. Moreover, in addition to scientific communication, the spread of Islam and linking socio-cultural ties between other cities.

It was an axes transit point for commercial convoys coming from the north and south of the Saharan Africa

It is important to know that these commercial routes were accompanied by a socio-cultural and scientific movement; due to the scholars who came with traders and interested in the dissemination of Islam and science in the Sahara and the majority of the entire Africa.

The project focus

The project focuses on the period between (15C to 19C) to examine its role before the Arab conquest, till the European interference.

Then, we made a special importance to the socio-cultural exchange as well as commercial profits. That is to say, the mutual contact between traders and the locals led to a vast exchange in culture, sciences, languages and dialects, religions, traditions and even costumes.

CHAPTERS

Chapter One: Geographical and Historical Background

i. Geographical Background

ii. Background and Historical Context

CHAPTERS

Chapter Tow: Caravans' journey through Touat

- i. The Role of Touat in the Trans-Saharan Trade
- ii. Reasons behind Convoys Passing Through the Touat Desert and the Leading Roads
- iii. Markets and Commodities
- iv. The Consequences of the socio-cultural exchanges and their Influence on the Touatians

CHAPTERS

Chapter Three: The Golden Ages and the Decline of the Trans-Saharan Trade

- i. The Race towards Hegemony and Decline of Trans-Saharan Trade
- ii. Trans-Saharan trade and the Transatlantic slave trade between the West Africa, Europe and the New World
- iii. The French Greed in the Algerian Sahara and the Decline of Trans-Saharan Trade

General Conclusion

Due to the mutual contacts between traders, and even, scholars with the locals, a vast exchange was made in many aspects of life; commercial as well as socio-cultural.

The period between the 15th to the 19th centuries is one of the most important historical periods in the region, which represented the moments in which seemed scientific renaissance during a certain era, due to the efforts of the foreign scientists and the scholars of the region who were educated by them and were the best creation for good ancestors.

SUM UP

Despite the fact that the region of **Touat** is **harsh** with a **dry climate** and **difficult natural conditions**, it has been **inhabited since ancient times**, and this may be due to several **reasons**, including:

SUM UP

Since their early history, the people of Touat have benefited from the location of their region, which is in the middle of the Saharan trade, linking the markets of the north of the Islamic Maghreb with the markets of Sudan through their trade convoys, where it was a axis point in the trade process and pilgrims.

SUM UP

This region was independent in its rule during this period, away from the political conflicts that existed in the Islamic Maghreb, due to its geographic dimension, what made it the refuge of scholars, some jurists and fugitives from political abuse..

SUM UP

Availability of water in the
region;

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SUM UP



SUM UP

Kasriya, Fggara: Water distribution system for irrigation



SUM UP

The region still has several public utilities, including mosques and Zaouiyas, which provide safe places to rest and accommodation of passers-by, pilgrims and students.

Moreover, it has special funds "waqf" to finance them.

SUM UP

One of the main **factors** that brought Touat out of its isolation in the deep desert is the availability of markets in it.

The **diverse human structure** in this region has also made the consumer market more and **more extensive**, and thus the diversity of products and the **great competition** for their **supply** in the region.

SUM UP

The **interest** of its people in **science** and **scientists** and the attempt to communicate with them, which made some of them **take on the task** of spreading science and Islam **in the Sahara**.

SUM UP

This period was characterized by **Sufism** because of the **spread of the zaouiya** that are **active** in the region. Due to the **efforts of sheikhs** such as **Sheikh Zeglawi** and **Sheikh Abdul-Karim Almaghili**; who introduced the method of **Qadiriya** to **Touat**, and worked to **disseminate** it in the **Western Sudan**. **Zaouiyas** took the task of **teaching**, which **spread widely** in the region until almost every g'sar has one for **education** and **accommodation**.

These conclusions, which I have reached through this research, are a very small part of the area of the Touat region, which is not fair to historical writings. We are required, at least, to study the history of this region, which was praised by historians and ancient scholars. Its history is a part of the collective and National memory of the history of Algeria.

Obstacles

I have encountered several **obstacles** in this research including:

lack of references

most of historians and scholars
whom were interested in the history
of the region did not care about
historical writings and chronicling
events

lack of scientific material

Also, most of the research material is a manuscript, which is difficult to be read with difficulty in reaching its owners.

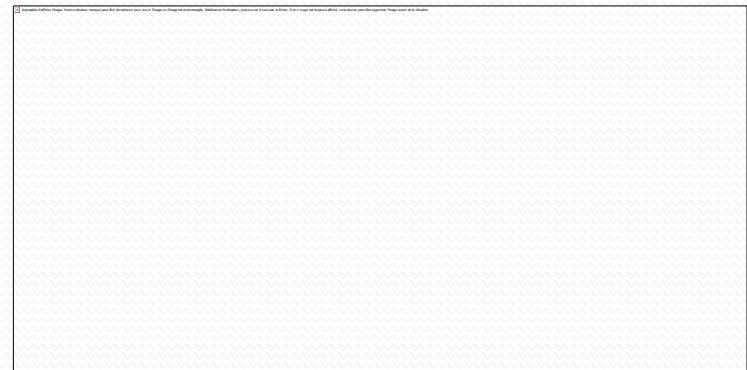
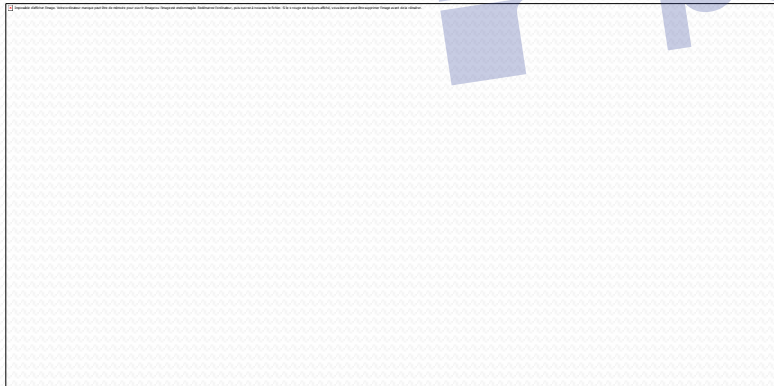


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But these obstacles did not discourage our research, from which I tried my best to remove some dust on the unrecognized history of the region, referring to some fingerprints, monuments and some writings left by some scholars, whether foreigners or locals, for the historical heritage of this region, which needs very deep studies to give its natural scope in the world.

In the end, I hope that I have succeeded to certain extent to fulfill the purpose of this research, as I would thanks the Almighty God for the accomplishment of this research, and then to the gudence of Mr. Sherif TEGUIA . As I appreciate other professors nemely; Dr. DR.BEKKADOURI Fouzia as Chairperson, and Dr. GHERMAOUI Amel as an Examiner for their guidance, comments and recommendations...

THANK YOU



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THANK YOU

