

## The Tijani Sufi Order in Tjakant During the 19th Century

Hamed Lamine Ibrahim <sup>1</sup>, Attia Omar <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Adrar, Algeria .Email: hamedlamin.brahim@univ-ghardaia.dz ; ORCID iD Link (<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-3963-0226>)

<sup>2</sup>École Normale Supérieure de Laghouat , Algeria . Email : attia.omar@univ-ghardaia.dz ; ORCID iD Link (<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-9197-8833>)

**Received : 24/11/2024 ; Accepted : 25/03/2025 ; Published : 10/04/2025**

### Abstract:

This research paper aims to highlight the interest of the Tajakanat tribe in the Tijaniyya Sufi order during the 13th/19th century. It does so by introducing some of its notable figures who championed the Tijaniyya Sufi order in the town of Tindouf, Algeria, such as Omar bin Al-Arab and the Ahl Al-Abd Al-Ramadani family. These figures played a significant role in fostering cultural connections between Tindouf and the cities of the Western Sudan, which contributed to the intellectual and cultural flourishing of Tindouf.

**Keyword:** Arab tribes, Amazigh tribes, Twat, cultural exchange, society.

### Introduction:

During the 13th/19th century, the Tijaniyya Sufi order gained significant attention among the Tajakanat tribe, the founders of the city of Tindouf. This tribe contributed to establishing cultural connections between the urban centers of the north and Sub-Saharan Africa. Additionally, they played a crucial role in spreading Islam and promoting its penetration into the depths of Africa, as well as in disseminating values of tolerance and unity among members of the Islamic Ummah.

### 1- Introduction to the Tajakanat and Tindouf:

The Tajakanat is a Lamtuna Sanhaja tribe that initially settled in the urban centers of the Sahara Desert and West Africa. The name "Tajakanat" is a Sanhaja term meaning "leaders" or "tools of leadership<sup>1</sup>." The branches of the Tajakanat tribe are generally distributed across Algeria,

---

<sup>1</sup> - Musa Kamara, History of the Beidan Tribes: Arabs of the Great Sahara, edited by Dr. Hamah Allah Ould Salem, Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st ed., 2009, p. 81.

Mauritania, Mali, Niger, Morocco, and Senegal, with a few members having migrated to the land of Hijaz, where they settled.

The founding ancestor of the Tajakanat tribe<sup>2</sup> is Jaakan (or Jakar) Al-Abar, son of A'al, son of Sharul, son of Siksik, son of Awladh, son of A'al, son of Yahdkar, son of Lamtuna, son of Al-Nu'man, son of Tubba, son of Sanhaja. Thus, the Tajakanat belong to the Lamtuna Sanhaja lineage. <sup>3</sup>Their founding ancestor was a commander in the Almoravid army during the reign of Prince Yusuf ibn Tashfin. He played a significant role in the early history of the Almoravid state and lived his prosperous life during the 5th/11th century. Jaakan Al-Abar is the same as the Almoravid commander Mudrik Al-Tilqani, whose tribe's name was reportedly altered from "Tajakanat" to "Tilqanat," as noted by the historian Hamah Allah Walad Al-Salem. Mudrik Al-Tilqani, also known as Mazdali bin Tilwakan, was a renowned commander in the Almoravid state who governed Tlemcen and led a quarter of the Almoravid army<sup>4</sup>. Ibn Khaldun refers to him by stating, "In the year 492 AH, Yusuf ibn Tashfin sent Mazdali bin Tilikan bin Muhammad bin Warkut, from the Lamta clan, with his forces to the Middle Maghreb."<sup>5</sup> He had a good relationship with the Almoravid Prince Yusuf ibn Tashfin, who frequently consulted him and valued his advice. An example of this is noted by the Senegalese historian Sheikh Musa Kamara (d. 1945): "... Yusuf ibn Tashfin soon took control, mobilizing a large gathering of the Lamtuna tribe, and settled in Aghmat. However, the prince Mazdali bin Tilkan or Tijakan advised him to abandon the idea"<sup>6</sup>.

He passed away as a martyr in one of the Almoravid battles at the beginning of their conquests. Jaakan Al-Abar left behind twelve sons, each founding a distinct branch of the tribe. They are: Yusuf, the founder of the Adishf branch; Omar; Aqlal (Aglal), the founder of the L'Gwalil branch; Ramadan (also known as Ramadhan), the founder of the Ramadheen branch; Ibrahim, the founder of the Awlad Ibrahim branch; Yaqub, the founder of the Adiyuqab branch; Atfagh, the founder of the Atfaghat branch; Musani, the founder of the Awlad Musani branch; Zalmat, the founder of the Zalamata branch; Ibn, the founder of the Adiybin branch; Dushar, the founder of the remaining Adushar branch; Nasir, the founder of the remaining Nawaser branch; and Abijah, the founder of the Id Abijah tribe. The scholar Mukhtar bin Buna listed the sons of Jaakan Al-Abar in poetic verses as follows:

---

<sup>2</sup> - Mukhtar Ben Hamid, *The History of Mauritania*, Vol. 6: Tagant, edited by Yahya Ould Elbaraa and others, Al-Najah Al-Jadida Printing Press, Casablanca, Morocco, 2009, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> - Moussa Kamara, Previous Source, pp. 81-82.

<sup>4</sup> - Hamma Allah Ould Salem, *The History of Mauritania: Fundamental Elements*, Al-Najah Publishing House and Zaman Publications, Casablanca, Morocco, 2nd ed., 2011, p. 62.

<sup>5</sup> - Abdel Rahman Ibn Khaldun, *The History of Ibn Khaldun: The Beginning and the Event in the History of the Arabs, Berbers, and Their Contemporaries of Great Importance*, vol. 6, ed. Khalil Shhada and Suhail Dhakar, Dar al-Fikr, Beirut, Lebanon, 2000, pp. 185-186.

<sup>6</sup> - Moussa Kamara, Previous Source, pp. 35.

The sons of Jaakan Al-Abar are twelve After ten, they are counted and recorded.

Yusuf, Omar, Aqlal, Ramadan Ibrahim, Yaqub, Atfagh, Musani, Bij, Ibn Zalmat, and Nasir, Dushar, thus compose them carefully and diligently<sup>7</sup>.

## **2-Tindouf Center:**

The historical center of Tindouf is currently an Algerian city located in the far southwest, about 1,800 km from the capital, Algiers. Geographically, it is situated between the longitudes of 6 and 7 degrees west, and between latitudes 28 and 27 degrees north. It is bordered to the west by the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic, to the northwest by the Kingdom of Morocco, to the south by the Islamic Republic of Mauritania, to the east by Adrar Province, and to the northeast by B char Province, including areas such as Hamada Al-Daura, Tabelbala, and 'Arq Al-Rawi.

## **3-Historical Context of Tindouf:**

The historian Abu Ubayd Allah mentions that the name Tindouf originates from "Tindafus," which means the wells dug by travelers and caravan owners, only to be quickly buried by sand due to sandstorms. He states, "You travel for three days through this mountain called Tindafus,<sup>8</sup> where there are wells dug by travelers, but they soon collapse and are buried in sand." Through Al-Bakri's account, we see an Arabic origin of the word, derived from the concept of burial; it was corrupted from "Tindafn" to "Tindafus." Rashid Al-Hassan, in his book *Geographical Names and Identity*, notes that "Tindouf" divides into two parts: "Tin" + "Adouf," meaning a place of guard in the Sanhaja language,<sup>9</sup> suggesting a Berber origin for the name. He supports this by noting that in the Tamasheq (Tuareg) language, "Tindouf" consists of two parts: "Tin" + "Adouf," meaning the location of the brain, which is found inside the bone. The word "Tin" in Tamasheq signifies a place or denotes possession. The formation of the name Tindouf is common in the Sanhaja language in some locations in the Sahara Desert, such as Tinerkouk, Tinilan, and Tinzaouaten. This is considered the most likely theory for the origin of the name Tindouf. The name has been recorded in local documents with a "y" following the "t" (Tindouf), as seen in the Bal-Aamash family's library, while other sources, such as *Fattash's History* by Mahmoud Kat, omit the "y".

The historical significance of Tindouf as a center is highlighted by its vibrancy and prosperity, particularly as it was a crucial stop for trade caravans and attracted numerous scholars. Everyone who

---

<sup>7</sup> - Weslam bin Mohamed El-Hadi, Mauritania Through the Ages, unpublished, Mauritania, n.d., p. 63.

<sup>8</sup> - Abu Ubaid al-Bakri, *The Maghreb in the Description of Africa and the Maghreb (a part of The Routes and Kingdoms)*, Dar al-Kitab al-Islami, Cairo, Egypt, n.d., p. 156.

<sup>9</sup> - Rachid El-Hussein, *Geographical Names and Identity*, Dar al-Manahil, Morocco, 2008, p. 12.

passed through praised its people, noting their generosity. The scholar Muhammad Yahya ibn Muhammad al-Mukhtar al-Walati (d. 1330 AH / 1914 AD)<sup>10</sup> referred to it in his pilgrimage journey by saying: "And Abidin gifted us a mature male camel and a good canopy and provided for us, so we left it eight days remaining from Jumada al-Akhira in the year sixteen after three hundred and a thousand, intending Tindouf, so we stayed before it twelve nights, including a two-day stay"<sup>11</sup>.

Mahmoud Kat mentioned Tindouf in his book *Fattash* during the 10th century AH / 16th century AD: "So I came to Tindouf and found Qusi bin Sulayman its Imam and Zahir al-Bakkai its judge, then I departed, and he provided me with a thousand dinars." <sup>12</sup>Mahmoud Kat's reference to Tindouf came in his account of the journey of Sharif Ahmad al-Siqilli, who intended to reach the center of Timbuktu. He passed through Tindouf in the year 925 AH / 1519 AD, starting from his country, Iraq, heading towards the center of Meknes, then to Tindouf, followed by Arawan, and finally arriving in Timbuktu. <sup>13</sup>What Al-Siqilli mentioned in his journey about the Tindouf center in the early 10th century AH / 16th century of the presence of a judge and an imam, and the money given to him by the people of Tindouf, amounting to 1000 gold dinars, a considerable amount at that time, indicates that the area was prosperous both culturally and economically. The scholar Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Kamili referred to the Tindouf center, describing its architecture that impressed him during his stay with the Tagkant,<sup>14</sup> where he stayed for about ten years (1299-1309 AH / 1881-1891 AD) during his journey from the east, passing through Tindouf on his way to Marrakech.

In 1267 AH / 1850 AD, a group from the Tagkant tribe settled in Tindouf and established a zawiya (Islamic religious school or monastery) and a mosque. This establishment is considered a significant event in the cultural history of Tindouf. The credit for founding the zawiya and building the mosque goes to the scholar Sheikh Muhammad Al-Mukhtar Bel'Aamash. Since the founding of this Tagkant zawiya in Tindouf, it has become a fundamental pillar of knowledge, spirituality, and

---

<sup>10</sup> - He is Muhammad Yahya bin Muhammad al-Mukhtar bin al-Talib Abdullah al-Naffaa bin Ahmad Hajj al-Dawi al-Jaafari al-Walati, born in 1259 AH / 1842 CE in Walata. There, he grew up and studied under its scholars, becoming proficient in various Islamic and linguistic sciences. He undertook a pilgrimage journey, which is documented in a manuscript. He left his hometown of Walata on 7 Rajab 1311 AH / April 14, 1898 CE, heading towards the Holy House of Allah, and returned on 60 Shawwal 1317 AH / February 7, 1900 CE. His journey lasted approximately 16 years, during which he visited many Arab countries. He was known for his prolific writing, with his works totaling one hundred in fields such as the Quran, Hadith, jurisprudence, principles, and the Arabic language, among others. He spent his life working as a judge and teacher until his death in 1330 AH / 1911 CE. See: Muhammad Yahya bin Muhammad al-Mukhtar al-Walati, *The Hajj Journey: The Part Concerning Tindouf*, edited by Brik Allah Habib, Dar al-Ma'arifa, Algeria, 2009, pp. 15-27.

<sup>11</sup> - The same source, p. 67.

<sup>12</sup> - Mahmoud Ka'at al-Tinbukti: *Tareekh al-Fattash fi Akhbar al-Buldan wa al-Juyush wa Akabir al-Nas wa Dhikr Waqa'i' al-Takror, wa 'Azam al-Umur, wa Tafreeq Ansab al-'Abid min al-Ahrar*, edited by Adam Bemba, al-Matba'a al-Risala, Damascus, Syria, 1st ed., 1435 AH / 2014 CE, p. 109.

<sup>13</sup> - The same source, p. 109.

<sup>14</sup> - Ibn Tuwair al-Jannah: *Journey of Desire and Blessing*, manuscript, photocopy with the researcher, pp. 4 and 5.

Sufism, with its influence spreading throughout the Sahara and the urban centers of West Africa. The prosperity of Tindouf was primarily due to the personality and zawiya of Bel'Aamash, which played a significant role in stimulating the Maghrebi and African environment<sup>15</sup>.

Following the establishment of the mosque and zawiya, Tindouf expanded to include three neighborhoods: Al-Mousani, Al-Ramadhin, and Al-Qasabi. These neighborhoods, along with the mosque and the zawiya of Sidi Bel'Aamash, constitute the primary architectural foundation and the true nucleus in the urbanization of Tindouf. The scientific flourishing of Tindouf, thanks to the scholar Al-Mukhtar bin Bel'Aamash, is evident in that hundreds of scholars and jurists graduated from it. Among the notable scientific achievements of the zawiya of the scholar Al-Mukhtar Bel'Aamash is that Oscar, the then-King of Sweden and Norway, requested from the Ottoman Caliph Abdul Hamid II to send a scientific delegation led by the genealogist, jurist, and literary scholar Mahmoud Al-Turkazi, one of the most prominent students of the scholar Al-Mukhtar Bel'Aamash.<sup>16</sup> Additionally, the other tribes of Tindouf played a role in preserving the cultural and scientific heritage of the region, and the scholars and jurists of the Raqibat tribe contributed effectively through their lectures and writings, which spread throughout the desert plains and hamadas of Tindouf. Among them stood out the jurist and righteous saint, Sidi Ahmad Al-Raqibi<sup>17</sup>.

#### **4-Sufism Among Tagkant:**

Linguistically, Sufism (tasawwuf) has several derivations, including it being derived from the purity of the hearts.<sup>18</sup> Others see its derivation as being linked to those who sit in the first row (saff) in the mosque during prayers.<sup>19</sup> Sheikh Ibn Taymiyyah, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "These people—the Sufis—were named after their outward appearance, the woolen garment, as it has been said about one of them: he is a Sufi. Their path is not restricted to wearing wool, nor did they mandate it, nor did they link the matter to it, but they were associated with it because they considered it outwardly representative."<sup>20</sup> The term "Sufism" frequently appeared in pre-Islamic literature, meaning the intention to distance oneself from worldly adornments, thus becoming a title for asceticism and contentment.

---

<sup>15</sup> - Abdelhak Mazouz: *Traditional Desert Architecture in Tindouf*, 1st ed., Ministry of Religious Affairs and Endowments Publications, Tlemcen Capital of Islamic Culture, Algeria, 2011, pp. 30-32.

<sup>16</sup> - Mustapha Ben Dehina: *Harvests from the History of Tindouf*, Higher Council for the Arabic Language Publications, Dar Rajai for Publishing, Algeria, 2010, p. 11.

<sup>17</sup> - The same source, p. 11.

<sup>18</sup> - Ibrahim Basyuni: *The Origins of Islamic Mysticism*, Dar Al-Ma'arif, Egypt, 1969, p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> - Saad Khemissi: *Studies in Islamic Philosophy*, Dar Al-Huda, Algeria, 2002, p. 22.

<sup>20</sup> - Ibn Taymiyyah: *Encyclopedia of Fiqh al-Sunnah (Fiqh of Sufism)*, Vol. 3, Edited and Annotated by Sheikh Zuhair Shaiq al-Kabi, Dar al-Fikr al-Arabi, Beirut, Lebanon, n.d., p. 24.

In technical terms, Sufism is defined as an Islamic legitimate way for the purification of the hearts and the refinement of the soul.<sup>21</sup> Abu al-Abbas Ahmad al-Barnusi said: "The essence of Sufism is the station of *ihsan*, which the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, explained as worshipping Allah as if you see Him, for even if you do not see Him, He sees you. Sufism is one part of the religion that Gabriel—peace be upon him—taught the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, and this is how the term Sufism takes on the meaning of devoting oneself to worship, withdrawing to Allah, turning away from worldly adornments, and practicing asceticism."<sup>22</sup> Most sources on Sufism agree that it is about drawing closer to Allah through His worship and abstaining from worldly pleasures, or reaching the soul and human morals to the point of annihilation in divine presence, or it is a behavioral path that relies on austerity and adopting virtues to purify the soul and elevate the spirit.

### **5-Sufism According to Ibn Khaldun:**

Ibn Khaldun defines Sufism as "devotion to worship, seclusion for God, turning away from the adornments and embellishments of the world, and abstaining from the pleasures, wealth, and status that the masses pursue. It is the isolation from people in solitude for worship."<sup>23</sup> Thus, Sufism is the cleansing of the heart from anything other than God Almighty and adorning it with the remembrance of God.

The attraction of people to join moderate Sufi orders stems primarily from the spiritual guidance provided by the Sufi sheikh, followed by the taking of the pledge and the granting of authorization to each disciple or follower. The aim of the Sufi sheikhs was to save the desert tribes from misguidance and ignorance and to guide them towards what would benefit them in their worldly lives and hereafter, by teaching the ways of righteousness and piety. They also aimed to expose the strategies employed by European states, whether in the Arabian Peninsula or Africa, to exploit the unaware and simple-minded among the general populace. For this reason, Sufi orders often led reform movements and took the forefront in resisting European colonialism<sup>24</sup>.

### **6-The Tijaniyya Order:**

The Tijaniyya Order is among the most prominent Sufi orders adopted by the Jakanites, particularly in their settlement in Tindouf in the mid-19th century. In Tindouf, the house of the Ahl

---

<sup>21</sup> - Ibrahim Basyuni: *The Same Source*, p. 19.

<sup>22</sup> - Youssef ben Yahya ben Isa: *Desire for the Men of Sufism*, manuscript held at the Bekeria Library, Sidi Ahmed Didi Zaouia, Tamantit, Algeria, folio 01.

<sup>23</sup> - Abdul Rahman ibn Khaldun: *Muqaddimah of Ibn Khaldun*, Dar Saader, Beirut, 2nd ed., 2005, p. 357.

<sup>24</sup> - Salah Bouslim and Miloud Qassim: "The Sanusi Movement and Its Expansion Across the Sahara Desert (A Historical Study)," *Al-Wahat Journal for Research and Studies*, published by the University Center of Ghardaia, Algeria, no. 15, Arab Printing House, Ghardaia, 2006, p. 21.

al-Abd family became a center for the disciples of the Tijaniyya Order, where they would gather to recite the Quran and perform the daily litanies characteristic of Tijani Sufism. Among those who contributed to the establishment of the Tijaniyya Order in Tindouf was Sheikh Ahmad ibn Muhammad al-Kamali al-Dar'i, who resided in Tindouf for ten years (1299-1309 AH / 1881-1891 AD). He was considered a sheikh and a representative of the Tijaniyya Order, and he undertook several journeys, the most notable being his pilgrimage to the East and his travels to West Sudan, where he met Sheikh Umar al-Futi al-Tijani. He was a scholar, jurist, poet, and author. He passed away on 20 Dhul-Hijjah 1315 AH (May 12, 1898) in Marrakesh.<sup>25</sup> A letter dated Muharram 1316 AH (May 1898) was sent from Marrakesh to Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Abd ibn Muhammad al-Hartani, announcing the death of Sheikh al-Kamali and informing the Jakanites in Tindouf of his passing<sup>26</sup>.

Among the most notable students of Sheikh Ahmad al-Kamali al-Tijani was the poet Sheikh Omar ibn al-Arab ibn Mawlud ibn Muhammad al-Hartani ibn al-Tahir ibn Abi Bakr al-Jakani al-Ramdhani. He was deeply influenced by and adhered to the Tijaniyya Order, serving as its representative within his tribe. He extensively praised his sheikh in his poetry collection, which he titled "Diwan Hassan."<sup>27</sup> His strong attachment to the Tijaniyya Order and his love for his sheikh is evident in the introduction to his book and poetry collection, "Diwan Hassan," where he states:

"In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate. Praise and blessings be upon Muhammad and his family and companions, with blessed initiation and conclusion. Praise be to God with all His praises... After that, I am the weak servant, hoping for the forgiveness of his Master, holding onto the status of my teacher, Mawlay Ahmad ibn Sidi Muhammad al-Kamali, and the status of his teacher, Sidi Muhammad ibn Qasim, and the status of my teacher, Mawlay Ahmad al-Tijani, by Your mercy, which encompasses everything. Omar ibn al-Arab ibn Mawlud ibn Muhammad al-Hartani ibn al-Tahir ibn Boubakr al-Jakani, al-Ramdhani, al-Mas'adi, al-Tindufi, intended to write a book in the language of his people, and I have brought forth springs in it that none of them have drawn from before me... I named it 'Diwan Hassan,' and it is divided into chapters... The first chapter of the verses is in praise of my teacher, Mawlay Ahmad ibn Sidi Muhammad al-Kamali"<sup>28</sup>.

---

25 - Abdullah Hamadi El Idrissi: Tindouf and Tjakant: History, Virtues, and Heroism, vol. 1, 1st ed., Dar Al-Kitab Al-Malaki, Algeria, 1434 AH / 2013 CE, p. 212.

26 - The manuscript of the letter is preserved in the Ahle Al-Abad Library, located in Tindouf, Algeria.

27 - Abdullah Hamadi Al-Idrissi: The same source, pp. 214-215.

28 - Omar bin Al-Arab bin Mouloud: Diwan Hassane, manuscript at the Khizana of Ahl Al-Abd, Tindouf, Algeria, folio 1.

In the region of Shinqit (present-day Mauritania), several scholars from the Jakanite tribe followed the Tijaniyya Order. Among the most prominent were:

**a-Sheikh Muhammad ibn Sidi ibn al-Talib Maham al-Jakani:**

Born in 1297 AH / 1880 AD in Shinqit, he was a distinguished scholar, author, and head of an Islamic educational circle. He was an ascetic Sufi who imparted knowledge to many scholars, including Muhammad al-Amin ibn Zaydan (d. 1335 AH / 1917 AD) and Ahmad ibn Muhammad Aynayn (d. 1322 AH / 1910 AD). He began teaching and issuing fatwas at the age of twenty and mastered most of the sciences known in his time. He undertook a scholarly journey to the region of Qiblah in search of answers to eighty complex questions. During this journey, he met many scholars, engaged in discussions with them, and benefited from their knowledge, such as Bab ibn Sheikh Sidiya (d. 1342 AH / 1923 AD), Muhammadi ibn Ahmad ibn Badi, and Sheikh Muhammad Fal ibn Bab (d. 1349 AH / 1930 AD). He learned the Tijaniyya Order from them, was renowned for his piety, uprightness, and efforts in reconciliation. He passed away in 1345 AH / 1926 AD and left behind several works, including:

- "Al-Nasiha Al-Hadiya fi Al-Tasawwuf" (Guiding Advice on Sufism)
- "Risala fi Jawaz Qism Riqab al-Habs li-l-Darura" (A Treatise on the Permissibility of Distributing Prisoners' Necks out of Necessity)
- "Nadhm Adab wa Shurut al-Wird al-Tijani" (A Poem on the Etiquette and Conditions of the Tijani Litanies)
- "Al-Mizan al-Qawim" (The Just Balance)
- **Various Fatwas and Jurisprudential Rulings.** <sup>29</sup>

**b- The House of Al-Abid Al-Ramadani Al-Jakani as the Center of the Tijaniyya Order in Tindouf:**

**Mohammed Al-Abid ibn Mohammed Al-Hartani:**

Mohammed Al-Abid ibn Mohammed Al-Hartani Al-Massoudi Al-Jakani from Tindouf was one of the founders of the city of Tindouf alongside the scholar Mohammed Al-Mukhtar ibn Belamch. According to Judge Al-Arawani: "... the first to establish Tindouf were Marabout ibn Al-Ammash and Al-Abid ibn Al-Hartani among the descendants of Al-Abid. Marabout is from the descendants of

---

<sup>29</sup> - Mohamed Abdullah bin Al-Moustafa: Among the Prominent Scholars of Chinguetti: A Profile of 212 Scholars, vol. 1, Ministry of Culture, Directorate of Culture and Arts, Islamic Republic of Mauritania, 2013, pp. 86-87.



Massan and is known as a learned and pious judge with a reputation for hospitality and leadership."

30

Mohammed Al-Abid ibn Mohammed Al-Hartani held a prominent position within his tribe and in Tindouf generally, due to his commendable character, generosity, and bravery. He was a wealthy merchant, as evidenced by the substantial inheritance he left after his death, amounting to 16,000 riyals in gold and two mithqals of gold. He was a prominent trader in Tindouf, particularly in the salt and gold trade between the markets of Taoudeni and Tinkitou, undertaking two annual trips.<sup>31</sup> His home was known for its hospitality, hosting many visitors, including the notable scholar Ahmed ibn Mohammed Al-Kamali Al-Dhari Al-Draei, who stayed with him for ten years (1881-1892). This reflects his broad-mindedness, generosity, and excellent hospitality.<sup>32</sup> Sources do not provide a precise date of his death, but documents related to the division of his estate suggest he passed away in the early 20th century.<sup>33</sup>

### **Sheikh Abdullah ibn Mohammed Al-Abid ibn Mohammed Al-Hartani Al-Ramadani Al-Jakani Al-Tindoufi:**

Sheikh Abdullah ibn Mohammed Al-Abid ibn Mohammed Al-Hartani ibn Al-Tahir ibn Abu Bakr Al-Massoudi Al-Ramadani Al-Jakani Al-Tindoufi was a prominent scholar and merchant. He was engaged in trade between Tindouf and markets in Sub-Saharan Africa and held a significant position within his community. His home was renowned for its hospitality, and he was known for his generosity. The traveler Al-Walati noted: "... we stayed at the house of Al-Abid with Abdullah ibn Al-Abid, who treated us with the utmost kindness, providing us with a spacious place for our families. We stayed in Tindouf for a year and a month in benevolence and kindness."<sup>34</sup> His cousin, the scholar Mohammed Habibullah ibn Miabi Al-Jakani Al-Shinqiti (d. 1364 AH/1944 CE), praised Sheikh Abdullah ibn Mohammed Al-Abid in a letter, describing him as noble, generous, and virtuous, and expressed a wish to meet him soon due to his sincere affection. Sheikh Abdullah ibn Mohammed Al-Abid passed away at the beginning of the 14th century AH/20th century CE.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>30</sup> - Mohamed Mahmoud Sidi Boubakar Al-Arouani: *Kitab al-Tarjamān fī Tārīkh Azawād wa Arwān*: Manuscript at the Ahmad Baba al-Timbukti Center, Timbuktu, Mali, No. 73, folio 101v.

<sup>31</sup> - Brek Allah Habib: *Trade Relations Between the City of Tindouf and West Africa Through the Documents of the Family of Al-Abid*, op. cit., p. 203.

<sup>32</sup> - The same source, p. 205.

<sup>33</sup> - Taqyeed: The division of the estate of Muhammad al-Abid ibn Muhammad al-Hartani, manuscript document in the Khizana of Ahl al-Abid, Tindouf, Algeria."

<sup>34</sup> - Muhammad Yahya ibn Muhammad al-Mukhtar ibn al-Talib Abdullah al-Walati al-Shanqiti: *The Hijazi Journey (Part Tindouf)*, edited by Barik Allah Habib, Dar al-Ma'arifa, Algeria, 2009, p. 67.

<sup>35</sup> - Muhammad Habibullah ibn Miyabi al-Jakni al-Shanqiti: *A Letter to Sheikh Muhammad al-Abd ibn Muhammad al-Hartani al-Jakni*: Manuscript Letter in the Collection of the Ahl al-Abd Library, Tindouf, Algeria.

## **7-Sufism in Hassani Popular Poetry in the Tagant Region:**

This genre of poetry was significantly present in the literary movement of the desert tribes, evolving alongside classical poetry. It became widely disseminated and closely connected to musical expressions, hence the term "Laghne." Most terms used in its meters are derived from Arabic. A poem consisting of two lines is called "Qaf," the plural of "Qifan," and a poem with three or more lines is termed "Tal'ah," indicating it has extended beyond the two-line limit. Hassani poetry, like classical Arabic poetry, covers various themes such as praise, eulogy, elegy, and satire. Another category is "Atayhidin," derived from "Hadan," which is epic poetry celebrating the tribe's achievements and prominent figures. Performers, usually men, recite it while riding camels, adjusting their voices to a specific rhythmic mode suited to the musical scale. These chants, melodies, and words inspired and motivated listeners, calling for high aspirations, self-purification, and the adoption of noble qualities while renouncing the undesirable. They also boosted the morale of warriors in battles and defenses.<sup>36</sup> From the Tagant region, Omar ibn Larab ibn Mawloud ibn Mohammed Al-Hartani ibn Abu Bakr Al-Jakani Al-Ramadani, known for his significant Hassani poetry collection preserved in the House of Al-Abid in Tindouf, compiled his poetic work known as "Diwan Hassan." Born in 1271 AH/1854 CE, he received education from his scholarly family and from Sheikh Ahmed Al-Kamali Al-Dhari and embraced the Tijaniyya Sufi order.<sup>37</sup> While sources do not specify the year of his death, his manuscript, completed on 29 Jumada al-Awwal 1303 AH/5 March 1886 CE,<sup>38</sup> is a notable contribution. Additionally, Lalla Mayassa bint Abidin ibn Abdul Hay Al-Ramadani Al-Jakani was renowned in Hassani popular poetry. She was a pious, devout poetess who praised the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Hassani dialect. Her eulogies were widely circulated among the Tagant and desert communities, particularly celebrated during the Mawlid al-Nabawi. She lived a virtuous life during the 13th century AH/19th century CE<sup>39</sup>.

### **Conclusion:**

The Tijaniyya Sufi order is distinguished by its inclusivity and wide reach, extending beyond Algeria, its place of origin, to other parts of Africa and the world. This expansion reflects the order's adherence to Islamic values that advocate tolerance, unity among Muslims, and the rejection of violence and hatred. It also promotes the establishment of authentic Islam as a religion of moderation, free from extremism and excess. Consequently, the Tijaniyya order stands as one of the most

---

<sup>36</sup> - The same source, p. 17.

<sup>37</sup> - Abd Allah Hamadi al-Idrisi: The same source, vol. 2, p. 199

<sup>38</sup> - Omar bin al-Arab bin Mouloud: The same source, pp. 1-2.

<sup>39</sup> - Abdullah Hamadi El Idrissi: The same source, vol. 2, p. 210.

widespread Sufi orders, especially in Africa, contributing to Algeria's prominent cultural presence in the African and global contexts.

### **Sources and References:**

#### **Manuscript Sources:**

- **Al-Arawani, Mohammed Mahmoud Sidi Babakr:** Kitab Al-Tarjamān fi Tārīkh Azawād wa Arwān, Manuscript at the Ahmad Baba Institute, Timbuktu, Mali, No. 73.
- **Division of the Estate of Mohammed Al-Abid ibn Mohammed Al-Hartani:** Manuscript document at the House of Al-Abid, Tindouf, Algeria.
- **Mohammed Yahya ibn Mohammed Al-Mukhtar ibn Al-Talib Abdullah Al-Walati Al-Shinqiti:** Al-Rihla Al-Hijaziyya (Tindouf Section), ed. Brik Allah Habib, Dar Al-Ma'arifa, Algeria, 2009.
- **Mohammed Habibullah ibn Miabi Al-Jakani Al-Shinqiti:** Letter to Sheikh Mohammed Al-Abid ibn Mohammed Al-Hartani Al-Jakani: Manuscript letter at the House of Al-Abid, Tindouf, Algeria.
- **Omar ibn Larab ibn Mawloud:** Diwan Hassan, Manuscript at the House of Al-Abid, Tindouf, Algeria.
- **Ibn Tawir Al-Jannah:** Rihlat Al-Muna wa Al-Manna, Manuscript, Photocopy with the researcher.
- **Youssef ibn Yahya ibn Isa:** Al-Tashawuf ila Rijal Al-Tasawwuf, Manuscript at the Bakriya Library, Zaouia Sidi Ahmed Didi, Tamantit, Algeria.

#### **Printed Sources:**

- **Khamra Moussa:** Tārīkh Qabā'il Al-Baydān Arab Al-Saḥrā' Al-Kubrā, ed. Dr. Hamah Allah Ould Al-Salem, Dar Al-Kutub Al-Ilmiyya, Beirut, Lebanon, 1st ed., 2009.
- **Ibn Hamid Al-Mukhtar:** Jīyat Mauritāniyā, Vol. 6, Tagant, ed. Yahya Ould Al-Baraa et al., Matbaat Al-Najah Al-Jadida, Casablanca, Morocco, 2009.
- **Ould Al-Salem Hamah Allah:** Tārīkh Mauritāniyā: Al-'Anāshir Al-Asāsiyya, Matbaat Al-Najah Al-Jadida and Publications of Al-Zaman, Casablanca, Morocco, 2nd ed., 2011.
- **Ibn Khaldun, Abdul Rahman:** Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn: Al-Mubtada' wa Al-Khabar fi Tārīkh Al-'Arab wa Al-Barbar wa Man 'Āṣarahum min Dhawi Al-Shān Al-Akbar, Vol. 6, ed. Khalil Shahada and Suhail Dhakar, Dar Al-Fikr, Beirut, Lebanon, 2000.

- **Salem ibn Mohammed Al-Hadi:** Mauritania through the Ages, No publisher, Mauritania, No date.
- **Al-Bakri, Abu Ubaid Allah:** Al-Maghreb fi Dhikr Bilād Ifriqiyā wa Al-Maghreb, a part of Al-Masālik wa Al-Mamālik, Dar Al-Kitab Al-Islami, Cairo, Egypt, No date.
- **Al-Walati, Mohammed Yahya ibn Mohammed Al-Mukhtar:** Al-Rihla Al-Hijaziyya (Tindouf Section), ed. Brik Allah Habib, Dar Al-Ma'arifa, Algeria, 2009.
- **Katt Mahmoud Al-Timbukti:** Tārīkh Al-Fattāsh fi Akhbār Al-Buldan wa Al-Juyūsh wa Akābir Al-Nās wa Dhikr Waqā' i' Al-Takrūr wa 'Aẓā'im Al-Umūr, ed. Adam Bamba, Maktabat Al-Risāla, Damascus, Syria, 1st ed., 1435 AH/2014 CE.
- **Ibn Khaldun, Abdul Rahman:** Muqaddimat Ibn Khaldūn, Dar Sader, Beirut, 2nd ed., 2005.

### References:

- **Al-Hussain, Rashid:** Al-A'lām Al-Jughrafiyya wa Al-Huwiyya, Dar Al-Manahil, Morocco, 2008.
- **Mazouz, Abdul Haq:** Al-'Imāra Al-Ṣaḥrāwiyya Al-Taqdīdiya bi Madīnat Tindouf, 1st ed., Publications of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Endowments, Tlemcen, Capital of Islamic Culture, Algeria, 2011.
- **Ben Dehina, Mustafa:** Qutuf min Tārīkh Tindouf, Issued by the Higher Council for the Arabic Language, Dar Rajji Publishing, Algeria, 2010.
- **Basyuni, Ibrahim:** Nash'at Al-Tasawwuf Al-Islāmī, Dar Al-Ma'arif, Egypt, 1969.
- **Khemissi, Saad:** Abḥāth fi Al-Falsafah Al-Islāmiyyah, Dar Al-Huda, Algeria, 2002.
- **Ibn Taymiyyah:** Mawsū'at Fiqh Al-Sunnah (Fiqh Al-Tasawwuf), Vol. 3, edited and commented by Sheikh Zahir Shaiq Al-Kubi, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, Beirut, Lebanon, No date.
- **Hamadi, Al-Idrisi Abdullah:** Tindouf wa Tagant: Tārīkhā wa Manāqibuhā wa Batūlātuhā, Vol. 1, 1st ed., Dar Al-Kitāb Al-Malaki, Algeria, 1434 AH/2013 CE.
- **Ben Al-Mustafa, Mohammed Abdullah:** Min Abriz 'Ulamā' Shinqīṭ: Al-Ta'rīf bi 212 'Ālim, Vol. 1, Ministry of Culture, Directorate of Culture and Arts, Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

### Articles:

- **Bousslim, Saleh and Qassem, Miloud:** Al-Ḥaraka Al-Sanūsiyya wa Imtidaduhā 'Abr Al-Ṣaḥrā' Al-Kubrā (Historical Study), Article in Al-Wahāt Journal for Research and Studies, published by the University Center of Ghardaia, Algeria, Issue 15, Arab Printing House, Ghardaia, 2006.

**Theses and Dissertations:**

- **Brik Allah Habib:** Al-‘Alaqāt Al-Tijārīyya Bayn Madīnat Tindouf wa Ifrīqiyā Al-Gharbiyya min Khilāl Wathā’iq Usrat Ahl Al-Abid, PhD Dissertation, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, History Department, University of Algiers 2, 2014-2015.