

The cultural Role of The Private Libraries In Western Sudan Country during(8-9)th Centuries A h.

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Abstract:

This study aims to show the importance of books and private libraries in western Sudan country. Because of the continued encouragement of science (Al'ilm) and the jurists from all people there.

Especially, the governors and scholars were so interested in bringing and copying lots of books. Even if it's necessary, They would imported more from abroad at an expensive prices.

They held a lot of libraries and archieve centers, for copying, reconfiguring, arranging and coordinating books. Most of the the private libraries were taken place in the house of the scholars and the jurists. Then their sons and students had inherited them since the (8-9)th centuries AH.

Keywords:

Libraries ;Books ;Scholars ;Western Sudan; students.

الملخص: الدور الثقافي للمكتبات الخاصة في بلاد السودان الغربي

خلال القرن 8-9هـ

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى بيان أهمية الكتب والمكتبات الخاصة بالسودان الغربي، وذلك بالنظر الى اهتمام أهل المنطقة عامة وعلمائها

خاصة بتشجيع العلم والكتابة واقتناء الكتب وتكوين المكتبات، بنسخ الكتب وجلب الكثير منها حتى لو اقتضى الأمر باستيرادها بأبھض الأثمان.

وكان للحكام والولاة نصيب من التشجيع على العلم، وإقامة المكتبات، وتكوين مراكز أرشيفية لنسخ الكتب وإعادة تهيتها وتنسيقها وترتيبها. وتركزت المكتبات الخاصة في بيوت العلماء والفقهاء، وتوارثها أبناؤهم أو طلبتهم من بعدهم. وأصبحت ملجأ لطلاب العلم، من داخل المنطقة وخارجها. منذ القرن الثامن والتاسع الهجريين.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

المكتبات؛ الكتب؛ العلماء؛ الفقهاء؛ السودان الغربي؛ الطلبة.

Introduction

After finishing the collection of Quoran, they started to write down Hadith (the Prophet's sayings and deeds). Which is considered the second main source of the Islamic Legislation (Shari'a). Since that time, there were appeared many writers copying the Quoranic and Hadith Books. Because of the extension of islam lands, and he mixure with ancient civilizations like the Greek Persian and Roman, the Umayyad Caliphs encouraged bringing books and translating them into Arabic, whether in the orient or in Maghreb or western sudan as well.

In this paper, fistly I'm going to look for the history of books and the libraries in the islamic civilization. Then secondly I'll discuss how did the libraries spread in the Western Sudan Country. After that, Selling and importing books. finally, I'll try to have a look at Libraries of The scientific families. And the Foundation of Religious Libraries.

Using the historical method. Because, It is the most suitable to the narration.

1/The books and the libraries in the islamic civilization :

The emergence of libraries in the islamic civilization is due to the interest of Muslims in writing. Where the prophet (PBUH) ordered to write down The Holy Quran. After that, in the Rachideen Caliphs, the Caliph *Abu Bakr Al-Siddiq* ordered to write down and collect the Quran in one book. Finally, in the era of the Caliph *Osman bin Affan* they recollected The Holy Quoran completely and copied many copies to send them to the whole Islamic areas (Umar, 1990, p. 34).

By the emergence of the *Warraka* Craft (industry of papers) which was developed side by side with the movement of translation during the Abbasid era. Where we find *Bayt El-Hikma*(the house of wisdom) (Houcine, 2001, p. 151.) Inwhich they translated a great number of medicine and philosophy books from the Greek Heritage. Then they copied lots of copies of the translated books and in private places known as *Hawanit Alwarrakeen* (shops of warrakeen).(The first one who had been interested in scientific translation was *Khaled bin Yazid bin Moawya bin Abi Soufian*(d85H). He would like to be a caliph after his fother, when he failed, he changed his interests to (Al'Ilm) the science. He translated many grec books into Arabic. Especially, the books of chemistry . He founded a big library of translated books. (Habish, 1992))

However, they were interested to collect translated and untranslated books in order to arrange them into private drawers, seen later in the kings' and the princes' palaces and houses of scholars and schools. These shops were widely spread in all islamic towns like Baghdad, Cairo, Fez, Telemcen and Cordoba (Rebhi, 1999, p. 145.154)

2/The libraries in the Western Sudan Country :

The western Sudan Country is considered as one of the places of the islamic civilization. Which was affected by Maghreb and Egypt in their interest of books and libraries. The

Sultans of this country were very interested in this domain. The Sultan Mansa Moussa had bought a great number of books from Al-Harameyn and Egypt after his pilgrimage in 724H, and put them in his own library in his Sultani palace in Mali. Also the Sultan *Al-laskia Mohammed El-Kabir* during his pilgrimage trip in 902 H. In addition, they encouraged the reception of the emmigrated scholars who brought lots of source books. Paving he way to the growing of books trade and the spread of libraries in this country (DUBOIS, 1982, p. 287)

Paul Marti indicated to the great number of books that were existed in Timbuctu. He said : « though there was no printing machines in Timbuctu , but the books were increased more and more. Because the commerchants of Maghreb were coming to western Sudan with books as other goods (Marty, 1921, p. 126)

The libraries that were spread in Timbucu were full of expensive and valuable books. People there were very interested in collecting books in shops as big as trade shops. In fact , they were gaining much benefits from selling books.

The governors and the scholars were interested in copying and arranging books. which were put in private places in order to get more benefits (Al-TToukhi, 1986, pp. 187.189-190.)

Sultan Al-alaskia dawood was considered the first who got writers of books. And depended on some writers to copy the books. *Ka'at* said in this context : « (Al-alaskia) was the first who got writers to copy books. He might give books as presents to the scholars (Mahmoud Ka'at, p. 135)

Some scholars and jurists were on his way, they became collecting lots of different books. One of them might have more than 7000 books in his library (AL-Saadi, p. 297) Concerning the libraries in western Sudan. we find besides to libraries of Sultans and governors (Moulay, 2012-2013, p. 16)

some libraries of scholars and judges such as the library of Aal Aaqit. the juge Ahmed bin Ahmed bin Umar was the famous interested judge in collecting and copying the expensive and valuable books. Finally, students from everywhere came to his huge library he founded (Mardkan, 2001, p. 254)

The founder used to give great services of studies and researches to the students from anywhere. He used to borrow books to students from his rich library, which was a great heritage to his sons and students containing more than 700 source books (Al- Tinbucti , 1989, p. 13)

Also his son the judge called Umar bin Ahmed bin Umar who had got a great library full of famous books in all domains of knowledge. He used to take care of his students. It's said that he took the main part if it from his maternal grandfather the jurist *Andough Mohammed. He –himself- had copied many books by his hand-writing* (Bint Mohammed , p. 68)

One of the most famous libraries in the western Sudan country was the one of the judge *Ahmed Baba Al-Timbucti*. Because he had written, copied and bought lots of books (Al-Fanous , p. 183)

Particularly, he used to more interest to the religious studies, Collecting the source books and the manuscits. Unlucky later on , this library was domaged by the leader *Mahmoud bin Zargoun during his attacks on the city of Timbuctu* and its libraries and scholars. In this tragicidic period, the judge Ahmed Baba was so sad of his missed books. He declared that though he had the lowest number of books in his tribe, but he had missed more than 1600 books (Al-wafrani , 1998, p. 171)

We find also the family of Aal-Baghigh. To whom the judge Mahmoud bin Abi Bakr belonged to. He had got a great library full of source books. After his death, his tow sons ; the jurist Ahmed and the judge Mohammed. This later, whose

library was considered one of the biggest private libraries in Timbuktu. In which he collected lots of rare and valuable books, And allowed to borrow to the students (Saad Gheith , 2011, pp. 23-24)

Ahmed Baba had commented on this huge library and its contents he said : « when i came one day to this library looking for grammar (N'hou) books, he had given the more than i expected at all. » (Al- Tinbucti , 1989, p. 600)

Whereas, the family of Ka'at which got inherited a great library from the grandfather *Alf'a Ka'at* who left a rich library which was such a scientific wealth for all students and scholars (Abu bakr , 1994, pp. 235-236)

During the Maghrebian existence, the cultural movement was increased more and more in some areas. when the scholar Al-Mokhtar El-sanoussi had talked of the scientific movement during the saadids , he told that he found in the manuscript of Mohammed Al-Hodhayqi lots of information concerning Saadids cupboards in the southern of Maghreb and Western Sudan country (Al-Gharbi M. , pp. 556-557)

He was quoted as saying: "The Saadids, after taking over the reins of Maghreb, the Sahara and Sudan, have spent their efforts to collect scientific books from the far areas of Sudan and the Orient. Also they asked the scholars and the princes of Al_Harameyn and to send more books. At last they asked the Christians of Spain for the same aim (Al-Soussi , 1996, p. 336)

Especially in the days of Al-Mansur al-Dhahabi (Al-Gharbi M. , p. 558) whose days saw the development of the Saadid state in including all domains of life, despite the fact that this saadids interest in books and the scientific movement that touched the capital of government Marrakech in particular and the rest of its regions in general, including the western Sudan, where the Saadian guardianship was found in all its forms, may be affected even by the trans-Saharan trade on the line between

Marrakech and Timbuctu, passing through the Sibeh such as Shangit and Tisheit, where Sanussi tells us about a merchant called Ibrahim al-Basir, who was trading in sudan, and found on his way a village of several huts where he found many books. And that village is called a shamama (Al-Gharbi M. , p. 558)

3/Selling and importing books :

There were many libraries in the cities of Teschit, woddan and Shangit. they gave more interest to copy and import books. For example, in Cheet they had copied two main important books which were entitled in *Tahdhib Masa'il Almodawana* for the *Imam Al-baradai* in Ramadan of 876H.the second book was *Chareh Hikan Ibn Ataallah Al-skandari in dhi Al-qiada* of 963H.

There were also of rare local books like the book of *Tadbir Al-imara* for the *Imam Al-hadhrami*.(38) which was considered by some researchers as the first famous book in the region. There were also the only copy of the book of *Mawahib Al-djalil li-chareh mokhtasar khalil for Mohammed bin Abi Bakr Al-waddani* (d953H). It was the second well-known book after *Charej Al-ajrroumia* for *Abdullah bin Sidi Ahmed Al-wallati* (d956H).

There were existed also some of Hadith(Sunna) books in form of manuscripts in libraries of Teschit city as the library of the jurist *Abu Bakr bin Al-amine Al-Teschiti* (d11H.C) (Wald Mayabi , p. 70) who left a big library . So did his daughter Aicha , who had bought lots of rare books such as *Chareh ibn hajar Al-askalani lisahih Al-boukhari*. This matter indicated fairly that there were many famous houses of knowledge (A'ilm) in Teschit city and the richness of their inhabitants. *Al-burtuli* stated that the judge *Al-Haj Hassan bin Aaghidi Al-zaydi*(d1123H) had a precious and a large library, which included a several arts by writing and his own handwriting.

There was also the library of *Aal-Fadhil el-charif Al-Teschiti* which was considered the oldest library. According the local narration , It was founded by the jurist and the judge *Mohammed bin Fadhil El-charif El-Teschiti*(d1156H)

Also the library of *Aal-Hima Allah El-Teschiti* , which was one of the oldest and the richest libraries. It was called « Awqaf library » , because its founder *Hima Allah El-charif El-Teschiti*(d1153H). had left it as **Waqf** (endowment) for the scholars and the students. What confirmed this was the document he had written by his hand-writing : « In deed, these books are Waqfs (endowments) , no one of our sons can turn to them except by learning from them without currying them. » (Wald Mayabi , p. 71)

5/The Foundation of Religious Libraries :

In *shangi* city, people were interested in buying books and founding rich libraries full of books in several sciences of Arabic language and other branches of knowledge. One of the famous libraries was the one of the judge *Abdullah bin Mohammed Al-alaoui Al-shangiti*, who was known as *Ibn Razka* (Ibn Hawkel, p. 74).

They had great passion for science and interest in manuscripts. In one of their wars with the spanish christians, they had captured 50 christians and required the spanish to release them a ransom of the manuscripts. They asked for each prisoner 100 manuscripts of those kept in the stores and libraries of the occident. They got a total of 5000 manuscripts (Al-Nahwi Khalil, p. 151)

6/ Libraries of The scientific families :

There were lots of libraries in Shangit for families. They had been inherited by generations. Their benefits were addressed to the scholars and the students. Among these libraries , the library of *Ahl-Hibbat* and the library of *Ahl-*

Ahmed Abdulaziz, and the library of *Mohammed Al-Mokhtar bin Al-didi* and the library of *Ahl-Abdi and Ahl-Alhorashi* and the library of *Ahl-Alhassan and Mohammed Abdullah bin fal*. The great one was the library of *Ajl-Hibbat*, which was full of rare and riche manuscripts (Al-Burtoli, pp. 121-113.)

But in *wallata* there were more than 20 libraries full of rare source books. The famous one was the library of *Ahl-Sidi Osman Al-Mahdjoubi*. They got inherited it from their grandfather Osman. This library was still continuing in their generations. There were also the library of *Ahl-Aabideen* and the library of *babkr Al-mahjoubi* ruled by the judge *Anbawaih bin Mohammed Al-Mahdjoubi*(d1221H) (Wald abdillah , p. 179)

In addition, there was the library of *Aal-AL-Talib Al-burtoli* whose most books were copied by the judge *Al-Hassan bin Al-talib Ahmed Al-Burtuli* (d1173H). the student *Mohammed bin Abi Bakr Seddik* depended on it in his book *Fateh El-CHakour fi Ma'rifat A'ayan U'lama El-Tekroun*.(D 1209 H)

Conclusion:

To conclude, There was a great library in *ouddan* possessed to the judge *Mohammed bin Abi Bakr Al_ouddani* (d953H) (Al-Wallati Abu Bakr , p. 16)who had written down the first book explaining Mokhtasar Khalil under the title « *Mowhoub Al-Djalil lichareh Mokhtasar Khalil* ». The judge was interested in buying and coping the books. As a result , he got a huge wealth of knowledge books. His library was considered the among famous libraries in *Ouaddan*.

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