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Demographic distribution of the Tuareg in the Sahara**Dr. Ibrahim Al-Sabri****Dr. Amani Muhammad Al-Jahawi**

Summary:

The Tuareg are a people of nomadic and sedentary Berbers who live in the Sahara Desert, especially in Algeria, Mali, Niger, Libya and Burkina Faso. They are all Sunni Muslims. We will briefly discuss the history of the Tuareg people of the Sahara, the people who stood in the face of the harshest factors of erosion geographically and historically. Opinions differed about the origin of the Tuareg. We will try to review some of the opinions of historians by looking at who they are, and we will shed light on the population and geographical distribution of the Tuareg, and touch on social customs and also look at their culture, and we will address the political life of the Tuareg people, especially in Mali and Niger.

Keywords: Tuareg tribes, Libya, Algeria, Niger, Mali, Sahara.

Problem of the study: The problem of the study lies in knowing the historical origins of the Tuareg and the cultural aspects of Tuareg society.

The importance of the study: Reviving popular culture and paying attention to all its components and elements.

Objectives of the study:

- 1- Research into the customs and traditions of the Tariq community.
- 2- Reviving the Tariq heritage as a cultural and cultural resource.

Study methodology:

In this study, the historical and descriptive approaches were followed.

The origins and historical roots of the Tuareg

The Sahara Desert occupies the largest part of North Africa, and it is the largest hot desert in the world, with an area of more

than 9 million square kilometers, and it is full of oases and oil fields.

In the northwest of this desert there is the Atlas Mountains chain, which consists of two high mountain ranges with a group of high plateaus extending between them. A group of separate mountains also rise in the eleven countries that share this desert: Egypt, Sudan, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco, and Algeria. Mauritania, Chad, Mali, Niger, Eritrea, and Western Sahara. The longest river in the world, the Nile River, with its many tributaries, as well as the Senegal River, penetrates this desert. The Sahara Desert is bordered to the north by the Green Mountain and the Mediterranean Sea. The residents of the Badarn area (*) are considered among the most important residents who have experience in traversing the desert, and they have a major role in introducing the most important landmarks there.

They are all Maliki Sunni Muslims who are mixed with African beliefs and have the same identity as the inhabitants of North Africa and speak the Amazigh language. They settled in the African Sahara region hundreds of years ago, where they acquired the status of “masters of the desert” to insist on the ability to confront and challenge the harsh conditions of geography and climate. They are in their lifestyle the closest to the nomadic Arabs, an Amazigh group in sub-Saharan Africa.

According to some researchers - the word “Tuareg” is taken from the word “Tarka”, which is a valley in the Fezzan region in Libya, and the name is taken from a place in Libya, and not the name of the Muslim leader Tariq bin Ziyad as some claimed, and they were also called “the blue men” in European writings. Because of their use of blue fabric in clothing, it is

(*) A Libyan city, 200 km away from the capital, Tripoli. It is located in the west of Libya, bordered to the south by the Western Mountain and to the east by the city of Al-Jush.

preferable to call the Tuareg the name Limajen or Tamasheq (*).

They were closer to the Berbers, that is, free men, so they became a hybrid that combined in their blood several races, such as the Tarak, the Arab, and the African, because of their living with the Arabs in the north and with the African Negro in the south.

Different views on the origin of the Tuareg

Ibn Khaldun called them the Masked Ones, like all other Arab historians, and classified them in the second class of the “Sanhaja” classes (*), as he put it, because they were many people between “Kazula,” “Lamtuna,” “Misrata,” “Lamta,” and “Rika.” A group of historians believe that the Wariq are the Berber people who appeared in North Africa, and that they are one of the prehistoric tribes.

Ibn Battuta said about the Tuareg in his journey: “They are of the origins of the Almoravid state, and generally belong to the majority of the Tuareg Sanhaja tribes,” and the consensus of most historians is that they are descended from ancestors of “Amazigh roots” who lived in North Africa for a long time.

The Frenchman Gustave Le Bon had expressed an opinion about the places from which the Berbers came. In fact, the black-haired immigrants came from the banks of the Euphrates and the northwest of the country, or from a farther place, as is likely, although the people with blond hair and blue eyes came from Europe, and there is no doubt that They came from northern Europe, so it is likely that they came from the far west of Africa. We can see this by comparing the stone

(*) Tamshaq is a dialect of the Tariq language, specifically in the Timbuktu region.

monuments in Africa with the African stone monuments discovered in northern Europe(1).

The American historian William Ings stated that there is a general trend in the movement of civilization from south to north, and from east to west, and therefore the southern and eastern civilizations had more developed civilizations in the marginal areas in the northwest, and this confirms the validity of the movement of the Berbers from the Arabian Peninsula to Africa in that period. There are no symptoms of this migration.

Abdul Qadir Jami believes that the word “Tuareg” is a plural of the word “Taariq” because the Arabs used to call them “Tuareg” in reference to the tribe (Tarqa), which are Berber tribes that live in the desert of the Atlantic Ocean to Ghadames in the ninth century AH (2) .

Some historians say that the people of the Tuareg are descendants of the Germans who inhabited the plains of Fezzan in Libya, and there are those who confirm the opposite. The evidence is that the Germans, according to historians such as Herodotus, are dark-skinned, while the Tuareg are white-skinned, just as the peoples who directly participated in the formation of the Tuareg Fezzan was not inhabited by the tribes of Hawara, Lamta, Ezngen, and Imasoufen, and the only relationship between the Tuareg and the Garamant is the second name for Fezzan, known as Tariqa, which later became the name of the Masked Sanhaja band.

Historians and geographers differed in naming the Tuareg, in reference to their ways in the desert and their penetration into it, and the masked men are the famous names

¹Abu al-Qasim Muhammad Karru, era of Kairouan. Dar Talas for Studies and Translation, Tunisia, 1973, p. 12.

²Muhammad Saeed Al-Qashat, The Tuareg Arabs of the Great Sahara, Center for Studies and Research on Desert Affairs, second edition, 1989, p. 27.

that all those interested in all of North Africa gave to the Tuareg, and it was interpreted on the basis of the mask that the Tuareg wear and describe them with, as they put a red hat on their heads, and threw They have a small turban that hangs from under the blue mask to the mouth, and they take another cloak that covers the nose and another that falls on the chest and does not show from their faces, and for this reason they called them masked (1).

If we look at the history of North Africa, we will find different viewpoints of historians. Most Arab historians believe that the barbarians came from the Arabian Peninsula, at a time no less than thirty centuries BC, and the Phoenicians mixed with the Berbers along the African coast of Morocco in the twelfth century BC. The Phoenicians are Arabs from Canaan, the Berbers, who mixed with the Arabs of Qahtaniya (2).

The French writer Florian summarized the complete identity between Arabs and Berbers as follows: a common origin, one language, one emotions, everything contributes to a (3) strong bond between them

Through these two opinions, it is clear that the origin of the Berber Arabs is from the Arabian Peninsula, but there are other opinions that question this hadith. The origin of the Berbers is from the Arabian Peninsula, as well as its division, transforming them into Europe. This hadith does not deny the existence of a difference in the clans that formed the Berbers, but this difference It does not come across as similar to the differences that exist between the inhabitants of the Arabian Peninsula, north and south, and this hadith confirms what Ibn

¹Al-Dali Al-Mabrouk Al-Hadi, Tuareg Tribes, Documentary Study, Tripoli, 2006, p. 6.

²Saadi Othman, Berbers, Amazigh Arabs, Arabs, Education, Mobilization and Information Division - Libya, Tripoli, 2018, p. 28.

³Previous reference, p. 29.

Khaldun said, who sees the following in the Berbers: Berber tribes from various parts of Himyar, Canaan, and Quraish, who gathered in the Levant and Africa, and he called them Berbers because they were very talkative (1) .

Orientalist Geisel says: The word Berber refers to groups with very different ethnic characteristics, and although they are similar today in terms of language and morals, it is impossible to recognize them in the same family ethnically as the tribes of the Berber region and the Aures Mountains, although they have medium or short stature, and their skulls are long. He explained that among the people of Mzab (*) there are those who are short in stature, with broad skulls, and large black eyes, while the most important Tuareg people are those who have tall stature, skulls, and long limbs in North Africa (2).

Demographic distribution of the Tuareg

It is known to many that the Tuaregs live in the Sahara Desert, where they are geographically spread from Mauritana and the northwestern borders of Mali, and the borders of Sudan, northern Niger, and northern Chad, through the southwest of Libya to the southeast of Algeria. They are an ancient people whose lives are governed by an ancient system of traditions and customs that they inherited from their ancestors. The Tuareg, or every Tamshaq, have an ancient legacy of literature, medical sciences, and astronomy. They use herbs, burning with fire, and surgery to treat diseases when necessary.

¹Encyclopedia of the scholar Ibn Khaldun, the fourteenth volume, Lebanese Book House - Beirut, 1999, p. 177.

(^{*} The people of Mzab mostly descend from the Berber Zanata tribe.

² Alfred Bell Translated by: Abdul Rahman Badawi) Islamic groups in North Africa. , - Dar Al-Arab Al-Islami, Beirut, Lebanon, p. 44.

According to some sources, the Tuareg are distributed as follows, with approximate statistics, on various dates up to the year 2000:

Country	Tuareg population
Niger	– 1,427,000 1,800,000
Mali	1,470,000-790,000
Algeria	860,000 – 160,000
Mauritania	98.000
Burkina Faso	330.000 – 44.000
Nigeria	29.000
France	25.000
Egypt	22,000
Libya	620,000 – 18,000

Source: Miscellaneous statistics, Census 2000

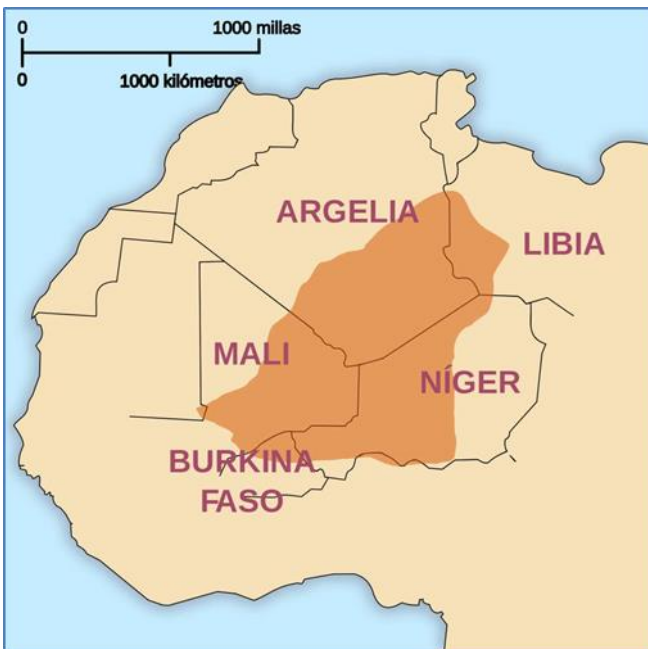
In the absence of accurate and documented statistics, we cannot give the correct number about the number of Tuaregs in North Africa. There are unofficial estimates that indicate that the total number is approximately 4.5 million, 85% of whom are in Mali and Niger, and the rest between Algeria and Libya. The same estimates indicate that they constitute from 10% to 20% of the total population of Niger and Mali.

The Tuareg live in the desert areas extending from southern Libya in the Fezzan region of Libya to northern Mali. They are located in the Hagggar region (*) in Algeria, and in Azawad in northern Mali, but their presence is mainly in the Kel Air region in Niger. The four regions are characterized by

(*) Al-Haqar or Al-Ahqar is a famous mountain range located in the far south-east of Algeria in the state of Tamanrasset

being drier and less populated than the other regions in which the Tuareg live. Until recently, the Tuareg were experts in this Sahara Desert, knowledgeable of its paths and secure the movement of caravans there. Their patience, courage, knowledge of water locations, and mastery of guidance by the stars helped them to do so.

Map (1) The spread of the Tuareg in Africa.



The Tuareg are distinguished from other Berbers, as they preserve the Berber dialect, “Tamasheq,” and write their letters, “Tifinagh,” from right to left, and from top to bottom and vice versa. They have preserved their language since the year 3500, and it is written in the Phoenician language. Nowadays, Tifinagh letters are still found in the mountains and caves, and

they bear witness to the presence of the Tuareg in this desert since ancient times. According to some sources, the Berber dialect they speak is actually one of the ancient Arabic dialects, and although they consider themselves a large unit, the The Tuaregs are divided into several tribes and clans. As a symbol of their identity, they call themselves “Kul Tamasheq”, which is a dialect of the Tuareg language spoken primarily by the Tuareg in Timbuktu.

Figure (1) Tuareg alphabet



They have their own script called "Tifinagh", which is a very ancient writing system that has been used by the Berbers of North Africa since ancient times. This alphabet is also called Libyan. The Tuareg alphabet consists of simple geometric signs, and contains 23 regular Latin letters and 10 additional letters, despite its disappearance in the northern region. Amazigh has continued to be used among the Tuareg, who consider it an alphabet specific to their people and distinguishing them from Arabs and other neighboring populations.

Some researchers mentioned the presence of linguistic signs indicating the presence of the Berbers in the land of Canaan (between Palestine and Syria) during the era of the Prophet Salih, who was sent to the people of Thamud, and the Tuareg use the word “Kul” meaning “the people” to identify their branches.

All Tuareg tribes share the same culture, and most of them trace their roots to the Himyar tribe in Yemen, and their physical appearance is clearly Arab from the south, but they tend to have a large tan due to the mixing of African and Muslim elements, such as the Hausa tribes in southern Niger, and the Manding and Fulani in Mali.

In Libya, the Tuareg community is dissolving within the cities, for example, Ghadames and Ghat, but in the desert in general, in Algeria, Mali, and Niger, they still live in the desert and refuse to live in the city. They even refuse education. There are very large international organizations that entered the desert to provide the means of education, but they still refuse. The idea of education, and the nomadic lifestyle in their lives, is still what takes them a very long time to enter the city and integrate into its communities.

Social life and community structure of the Tuareg

The Tuareg follow the tribe’s leader, who is called “Al-Amnoukal,” meaning the sheikh. He is spontaneous and firm. The woman also enjoys a great status among the Tuareg. She enjoys independence even if she is married. She can impose on the husband where the marital home will reside. She has the right to leave without her husband’s permission, and practice Business, dealing with other men, and hosting whomever you want, with or without the presence of the husband. Specialists considered that the Tuareg people revere and respect women. Tuareg women do not wear a mask on their faces, but men do. The most famous figure in Tuareg history is a woman called

Tin Henian, a leader who founded The great Berber kingdom of Ahakar.



Polygamy is also unacceptable to them, and based on societal customs in cases of divorce, a divorced woman has a prominent position in society, and the more times she divorces, the more she is desirable for marriage. If she is married, most likely to a relative, she has the right to wear anklets and other adornments known to women in general. Men have loose pockets with embroidered sleeves, and often have a dagger or sword. The hilt of the sword is studded with silver, gold, and precious stones and the names of its owners are engraved on it.

The Tuareg people live in tents, but a large portion of them settled in mud houses. The tents are made of rough pieces of cloth woven from goat hair. The poles are pulled together to be fixed with ropes and planted in the ground as a safe haven against the heat of the desert and the harsh climate. A small

table for drinking always appears in the center of the tent. Tea. There is another table usually reserved for guests and passers-by. When someone visits them, the women come out of their homes carrying bowls filled with camel milk. This is a sign of welcoming new arrivals, whether it is a family member who came after a trip or a guest.

Among the most famous musical instrument arts, which the Tuareg call “Tindi,” and other stringed instruments, such as the rababa, called “Imzad,” then the drum, which has a special place among them. They beat drums with different meanings according to each case, and women participate in clapping the man with his sword and drum, and dance workshops that take the form of expansion. and melodic narrowing, which is known to form different patterns across the Sahara Desert from the Atlantic Ocean to the edge of the Nile River.

Figure (2) the auction machine



Tuareg customs on the first night of marriage

The story of marriage begins like any human society when a young man falls in love with a young girl. This young man chooses a group of friends and family to accompany him. Then he sends a group of young men to meet with the girl's father in order to ask the girl for marriage. If the father agrees, he determines the dowry, and if the groom agrees to the dowry, he appoints an agent on his behalf. Custom in the Tuareg stipulates that the groom is not permitted to take his bride with him until those closest to him carry the dowry to the place of .the marriage contract. The dowry of nobles is seven camels

A gift is presented to the bride's mother called "Tagaste," which is a bull or a camel. When the gifts are presented, a group of women begin singing and dancing and asking the groom for the gift. Then the groom presents them with a group of bulls and then they slaughter them in front of all the women.

The wedding ceremony lasts for 3 days, after which the groom brings the rest of his wedding set, such as sugar, green tea, and shoes. The ceremony continues for another three days. In this ceremony, they distribute gifts to the people of the region equally. When the first night of marriage comes, the groom considers his bride as his mother, and on the second night, he is considered His bride is his sister, and on the third night the bride becomes his wife and they justify the necessity of reassuring his bride for the journey of a lifetime as a whole.

The next morning, the groom's friends come to visit him with the fat camel. If the bride is a virgin, they do not eat the camel's hump, but rather cook it and return it to the women.

Voices of joy rise, indicating that the bride is a virgin, but if the bride is not a virgin, they eat her, and the bride's family knows that their daughter is not a virgin, and they consider her a disgrace. After the wedding, the celebrations continue for a whole week, during which the bride goes out with her friends, while the groom stays in the tent and does not meet his father or mother.

The secret of the Tuareg wearing the tham

There are several explanations for their adherence to the mask, ranging from shyness to these people, and the custom of the Tuareg "masked men" explains their legend that one day the tribesmen went to conquer the enemy, and then the enemy came after them to their tents and there were only women, children, the elderly and men in the tents. The disabled, but the wise man ordered women to wear men's clothes, wear masks, and hide their femininity. And when they did this and stood face to face with the enemy, swords and axes in their hands, their men suddenly retreated because they did not find the enemy and attacked the enemy from behind while the women also attacked them, defeating the enemy and from that day "in the glorious epic" the men themselves told their women not to wear the veil in their celebration of this anniversary.

There is another interpretation of the legend that explains why the legendary desert princes (Tuareg) wore the mask. The masked people are the legend of the desert ruled by the "Queen of the Jinn" and its inhabitants are soldiers, but they remained under the control of the queen, to the point that they were covering their faces for fear of the evil spirits of the queen's soldiers infiltrating their bodies. In return, they were The Queen's punishment for them was to deprive their children of kingship and authority in the kingdom. She put livelihood in

the hands of women, and appointed Queen (Tinhanan). The Queen ordered the control of the far south, specifically in (the land of the immigrants), and she ruled there. Then the men wore the veil again, and the Queen ordered the women to use Necklace with five ivory beads (comisa) To be able to cast out demons

All these reservations about the idea of a unified Amazigh culture do not

conflict with the idea of common cultural denominators between Amazigh-speaking human groups. It is true that some of these denominators exist even in Arab culture, but their Amazigh-Maghreb origin is no longer debatable, and the Amazigh roots of North African Arab culture are evident in several Fields such as music, dance, folk tales, decorative arts and handicrafts The Maghreb Arabic dialects are also reflected. Algerian linguist Fadel Krivian says, "If the North African Arab region has borrowed a large part of the vocabulary of classical Arabic, then the phonetic grammatical structure has its origins in Amazigh," and by virtue of this and the fact that Amazigh culture has enjoyed, for many centuries, an oral culture in the first place. The first is the tales, proverbs and popular proverbs that are represented today by what is mentioned at the level of linguistic representation, The job of researchers in the field of the Amazigh language remains to write this oral heritage and publish it in books and specialized magazines, such as the Algerian "Awal" magazine, as well as on websites. At the level of cultural customs and traditions, we find this culture in the art of cooking, traditional rituals, and many social occasions, weddings, etc., and even celebrations. Today is the most famous farm festival, "January" (January 12), or the Amazigh New Year shared by all speakers of the Amazigh language.

Dances represent a very rich ancient variety. The dances also play social roles. The Tahiqilt dance sings about celibacy for young men and women, in which the girl chooses whomever she wants to marry as a husband. The connection with nature also has a role in the Alron dance, which was inspired by Tuareg women from a desert plant with that name.



Some studies indicate that the first military campaigns in the Sahara were in 1890, and France initially granted the Azawad region autonomy, but this was not in fact a colonial agenda to facilitate the acquisition of the entire region. Indeed, this is what happened, as France subjected the region to its control in the year 1932. It is understood from this that France controlled the desert, as it ruled some countries, and was not outside the control of the urban context, so there is no surprise as long as the desert is full of partisans. Political life in Mali was characterized by the victory of Modibo Keita to the presidency. Keita was known for his fight against French colonialism with Marxist ideas, which prompted his family to

initially convince the Tuaregs not to secede and of the necessity of building a unified state that coexists in the country, which includes all ethnic groups, excluding class differences, but he quickly What dispelled that dream was the practices of military racism, which made Prince Muhammad bin Ali bin Taher Al-Ansari lead the revolution, but Keita's overwhelming power led to him being arrested and put in prison with some of his friends.

In Niger, conditions do not differ much from its neighbor Mali, where the era of Hakani Diori was characterized by tribal and military conflict, and the first revolution in this period was the 1962-1963 revolution led by Prince Kidal Ade, who had experience in the Algerian liberation war (1).

During the period from 1970 to 1987, the region witnessed drought, which forced the population to abandon their animals and think about migration. The matter was particularly difficult, in addition to the drought that characterized the period in Niger at the hands of the dictator Seni Kountshe, who led the country with an iron fist, especially after an attempted coup. The Tuareg leadership, the president's reaction was to poison the wells, practice genocide, and open the northern region where the Tuareg majority was. The only refuge for the Tuareg people was to flee en masse to neighboring regions, believing that the historical ties that united their brothers in those countries would help them overcome the ordeal, but the matter did not. Not so. Libya, for example, recruited many of them and used them as shields and protection in its war with Chad.

In Mauritania as well, they used the trump card to put pressure on the Malian government, which received political activists

(¹)Fatyan Ali Mahdi, The Tuareg problem and its impact on regional and international strategies, a study in political geography, University of Diyala, College of Humanities, unpublished doctoral dissertation, 2022, p. 32.

and opponents. France began to take revenge on the rebels and carried out nuclear tests in 1957, which it carried out in the Tuareg desert. Since then, the desert has been ravaged by various types of epidemics and diseases as a result of the attacks to which they were exposed.

In the face of this tragic situation and the world's disregard for these difficult circumstances, the Tuareg returned to organizing and took up arms against the governments. As the end of the eighties approached, the Tuareg felt that their people were threatened with extinction because of the war waged against them, whether by other ethnic groups supported by the regimes or by racist governments, which He made the Tuareg believe in the necessity of armed organization and defense of themselves, and thus a group of liberation movements emerged.

Conclusion

The Tuareg are an ancient people who rule their lives with an archaic system of traditions and customs inherited from their ancestors. The Tuareg have a heritage of literature, medical sciences and astronomy. They live in Tunisia, northern Mali, Niger, western Libya, southern Algeria, near Tamanrasset, Djanet, Illizi and in Burkina Faso. The Tuareg is a complex issue, a history of overlapping events and incidents between countries, which have become a separate entity. When dealing with this issue, the complexity of the history of the region must be taken into account due to the lack and obliteration of facts. There must be coordinated efforts from all parties, whether by the Tuareg or by the countries concerned, as we must not forget. The Tuareg preserved their customs, traditions, language, and religion, as well as their traditional lifestyle, which was characterized by chivalry and chivalry, which helped them confront France.

The Reviewer

1 - Alfred Bell (translated by: Abdul Rahman Badawi), Islamic groups in North Africa - Dar Al-Arab Al-Islami, Beirut, Lebanon.

2-Al-Dali Al-Mabrouk Al-Hadi, Tuareg tribes, documentary study, Tripoli.

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10-Journal of Amazigh Studies, a peer-reviewed scientific journal, No. 7.

11-Libya Amazigh Conference through this link: <http://www.altlibya.org/Links/linksMain.htm> through this link: <http://ethnisme.ben-vautier.com/veyrac/veyrac4.html>

proper knowledge of connecting speech in general. Because of their lack of knowledge during their university studies, most of the participants have difficulty