

THE SPREAD OF ISLAM IN THE SUDAN

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ABSTRACT:

In spite of the fact that the first contacts between the Muslims and the northern parts of the Sudan took place immediately after the Muslims had conquered Egypt, yet the process of Arabization and Islamization of that country was not effectively completed until after the middle of the Seventh Century A.H. (Thirteenth Century A.D.). The purpose of this paper is to make clear the reasons for this delay and to show how Islam could overcome all obstacles on its way to the heart of this country, in a long but rather peaceful process.

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The Sūdān is counted to-day as one of the Arab-Islamic States; however, its Arabization and Islamization was not effectively completed until after the middle of the seventh century A.H. (thirteenth century A.D.) in spite of the fact that the first contacts between the Muslims and the northern parts of the Sūdān took place immediately after the Muslims had conquered Egypt (641 A.D.). This delay was due to several reasons amongst which were: the resistance which the inhabitants of the northern Sūdān showed to the first attempts of the Arab Muslims to conquer their land, the poverty of the land of Nubia adjacent to Egypt, and the occupation of the Arab Muslims at the beginning of the Islamic era with the conquests in North Africa and other places in Central Asia.

In order to follow and understand the process of Arabization and Islamization in the Sudan, it is indeed necessary to give a brief account of the historical background of this country.

“The ancient history of the northern Sudan evidences increasing Egyptian influence and penetration, which extended as far as the Fourth Cataract. The Pharaohs raided their southern neighbours in order to protect themselves from attacks, to secure control of the rich gold mines, to capture slaves, and to establish trade. As a result of this, together with the influence of the immigrants, the country was thoroughly Egyptianized”.¹ For more than ten centuries and until 350 A.D. the Sudan, up to the present site of Khartoum, was dominated and ruled by a Sudanese independent dynasty that was, however, completely influenced by the ancient Egyptian civilization. This was the kingdom of Napata or Kush, which later on acquired the name of the Kingdom of Meroe, being the name of its capital.

“By the middle of the fourth century A.D. Meroe had fallen on evil days and a process of disintegration had set in. From now onwards we know nothing to speak of about the history of the people living south of the confluence of the Nile and the Atbara² until the time of el-Mas’ūdī and Ibn Salīm³ el-Aswānī who wrote their descriptions of Nubia in the tenth century”.⁴

In the meantime Christianity became the faith of the people of this country. Most probably this happened by the end of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh century A.D., after the conversion of Abyssinia to Christianity which took place about 330 A.D.⁵

The spread of Christianity in the Sudan coincided with the rise of three kingdoms, that ultimately adopted that faith. These were: Nobatia, Makuria (in Arabic al-Muqurra) and Alodia (in Arabic ‘Alwa). Nobatia was the most northern of these three kingdoms with its capital at Bajarish, or modern Faras, which lies at the border between Egypt and the Sudan. To the south of Nobatia was the kingdom of al-Muqurra with its capital at Dunqula; and to the south of it lay the third kingdom of ‘Alwa with its capital at Soba on the Blue Nile south of Khartoum. “The two

northern kingdoms al-Maris (i.e. Nobatia) and al-Muqurra were culturally superior and more sensitive to developments in Egypt. The southern kingdom, though endowed with richer resources, culturally lagged behind the other two because of its close proximity to the primitive southern tribes".⁶ Nevertheless, Christianity became the state religion of all three kingdoms and was the bond that tied them together and to the Egyptian Church of Alexandria. Through these relations with Egypt the northern parts of the Sudan came in contact with Arabia and the Arabs in pre-Islamic times. Then it seems "... that in early dynastic days Arabians did enter Egypt in large numbers by way of the Eritrean coast and settle there; and in that case far more of them are likely to have settled nearer home and south of the Egyptian frontier, in the Sudan".⁷

Another route which brought the Arabs to the Sudan in pre-Islamic times "... ran across the Sinai desert, through Egypt and into the Sudan".⁸

The main stimulus for these early Arabian settlements in Egypt and the Sudan was no doubt the trade in African products such as gold, aromatic gum and ivory.

In the meantime and at the beginning of the seventh century A.D. Arabia witnessed a great religious and political change with the emergence of Islam. In 639, a few years after the death of Prophet Muhammad, Muslim armies had completed the conquest of Syria and started knocking at the doors of Egypt; and by 641 A.D. 'Amr b. al-'As,⁹ the leader of the Muslim army, was able to complete the conquest of the whole of Egypt. This new situation had its immediate effect on Nubia, due to the historical relations between it and Egypt. The Nubians, no doubt, did not look with satisfaction at the domination of Egypt by the Muslims who brought with them a rival religion. Therefore, they started harassing the Egyptian borders. These actions induced 'Amr b. al-'As, the governor of Egypt, to send out disciplinary raids against Christian Nubia under the command of the Muslim leader 'Abdallah b. Sa'd b. Abi Sarh, who was by that time the regional governor of Upper Egypt. This event finds different and rather confused accounts in Muslim sources.¹¹ However, it seems "... that the Muslims suffered great casualties at the hands of the skilful Nubian archers whom the Arabs henceforth nicknamed *rumāt al-adaq*, or the eye-smiters".¹² This and the poverty of Nubia itself were the two things that guided its relationships with the Muslims for a long time afterwards.

In 646 A.D. (25 A.H.) 'Abdallāh b. Sa'd b. Abi Sarh succeeded 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ as governor of Egypt. As a result of the continued Nubian attacks on Upper Egypt 'Abdallāh decided in 31 A.H. to march against them. This time the Muslims reached the heart of the Christian kingdom of al-Muqurra and conquered its capital Dunqula. Although the Nubian power was no match for that of the Muslims, yet they resisted bravely and deprived 'Abdallāh of a decisive victory. Thus, when the Nubians asked for peace, 'Abdallāh accepted their offer and concluded a treaty with the king of Nubia which the Islamic sources refer to as *Hudnat amān* (a truce of security).¹³ This agreement says:¹⁴

“In the name of God,... etc. This is a treaty granted by the *amīr* ‘Abdallāh ibn Sa‘ad ibn Abū Sarḥ to the chief of the Nubians and to all the people of his dominions, a treaty binding on great and small among them, from the frontier of Aswan to the frontier of ‘Alwa. ‘Abdallāh ibn Sa‘ad ordains security and peace between them and the Muslims, their neighbours in the Sa‘īd, as well as all other Muslims and their tributaries. Ye people of Nubia, ye shall dwell in safety under the safeguard of God and his apostle, Muḥammad the prophet, whom God bless and save. We will not attack you, nor wage war on you, nor make incursions against you, so long as ye abide by the terms settled between us and you. When ye enter our country, it shall be but as travellers, not as settlers, and when we enter your country it shall be but as travellers not settlers. Ye shall protect those Muslims or their allies who come into your land and travel there, until they quit it. Ye shall give us the slaves of Muslims who seek refuge among you, and send them back to the country of Islam; and likewise the Muslim fugitive who is at war with the Muslims, him ye shall expel from your country to the realm of Islam; ye shall not espouse his cause nor prevent his capture. Ye shall put no obstacle in the way of a Muslim, but render him aid till he quit your territory. Ye shall take care of the mosque which the Muslims have built in the outskirts of your city, and hinder none from praying there; ye shall clean it, and light it, and honour it. Every year ye shall pay 360 head of slaves to the leader of the Muslims (i.e. the Khalifa), of the middle class of slaves of your country, without bodily defects, males and females, but no old men nor old women, nor young children. Ye shall deliver them to the Governor of Aswan. No Muslim shall be bound to repulse an enemy from you or to attack him, or hinder him, from ‘Alwa to Aswan. It ye harbour a Muslim slave, or kill a Muslim or an ally, or attempt to destroy the mosque which the Muslims have built in the outskirts of your city, or withhold any of the 360 head of slaves, then this promised peace and security will be withdrawn from you, and we shall revert to hostility, until God decide between us, and He is the best of umpires. For our performance of these conditions we pledge our word, in the name of God, and our compact with faith, and belief in the name of His apostle, Muḥammad, God bless and save him. And for your performance of the same ye pledge yourselves by all that ye hold most sacred in your religion, by the Messiah and by the apostles and by all whom ye revere in your creed and religion. And God is witness of these things between us and you. Written by ‘Amr ibn Shuraḥbil in Ramaḍān in the year 31”. (May-June, 652 A.D.)

Thus the terms on which both sides agreed rest mainly on what was called “*Baqt*”¹⁵, or the exchange of Nubian slaves for Muslim provisions. The treaty also guaranteed the security of the Muslim frontiers and the safety of trade. The treaty “... shows that the Arabs had no intention of occupying Nubia and were trying by its moderate terms to put an end to the raids of their southern neighbours and to open the country for trade”.¹⁶ Indeed, it was the effect of the traders which in the long run paved the way for Islam in the Sudan. This process, however, continued for several centuries, as we shall see.

During the rest of the period of the first four Caliphs (12-40 A.H.) and throughout the Umayyad Caliphate (41-132 A.H.), relations with Nubia remained as they had

originally been established. When the 'Abbasīds came to power the first century of their rule in Egypt witnessed a period of unrest among the Arab tribes who resented 'Abbasīd rule and the heavy taxation they laid upon them. This was the beginning of a conflict which continued for a long time between the Nomads and the Governors of Egypt. The conflict reached its zenith when the "Caliph al-Mu'taṣim (218-227 A.H.) inaugurated his rule by dispatching an order to his governor in Egypt to strike off the name of all Arabs from the register of pensions and to stop paying their salaries".¹⁷ As a result of this the Arab tribes in Egypt - and elsewhere - began to look for another source of living. Some of them began to settle and cultivate the land while others drifted further south".¹⁸ In this respect says McMichael:¹⁹ "It would of course be those of the tribesmen who settled in the large towns or took to cultivation of the river banks who chiefly intermarried with the older Coptic population and remained in Egypt: the more nomadic tribes would naturally be more exclusive and incidentally less eligible in the matter of intermarriage, and such of them as penetrated in later years into the Sudan were probably still as purely Arab as when they entered Africa".

This text helps us to understand what type of Arabs entered the Sudan. But it is clear that the above mentioned policy of al-Mu'taṣim of exchanging Arabs for Turks was mainly responsible for the sudden increase of Arab immigration to the Sudan. It is perhaps also not without significance to state that the Arab nomadic tribes were attracted by the vast and rich pastures of the Sudan. Another thing which may have induced the Arabs to rush towards the Sudan was the rediscovery of gold and emeralds in the eastern desert. In any case the process of Arabization and Islamization of the Sudan passed through the decades of three successive powers that dominated Egypt for a long time, namely: the Fāṭimīds, the Ayyubīds and the Mamlūks.

Immediately after his arrival in Egypt the Fāṭimīd general Jawhar al-Ṣiqillī sent 'Abdallāh b. Aḥmad b. Sulāim al-Aswānī as an emissary to King George of Nubia.²⁰ In his letter to him Jawhar demanded the Baqt and required the king to embrace Islam. The king agreed to resume the delivery of the Baqt. But as to the adoption of Islam, the answer of the king reflects not only his utter refusal to do that, but also shows how true the Nubians were to their Christian faith. Then King George and his bishops decided to ask Jawhar to adopt Christianity.²¹

This could have been the first attempt to propagate Islam on an official base. In spite of the fact that the Nubians turned this request down, yet their relations with the Fāṭimīds remained quite friendly. As to the relations of the Fāṭimīds with the Arabs in Egypt it cannot be said that they were good, despite "... the favourable dispositions of the Fāṭimīds towards the Arabs".²² Then the aggressive policies of some Fāṭimīd Visirs, such as Badr al-Jamālī towards the Arabs led to more immigrations southwards.²³

The fall of the Fāṭimīd Caliphate and the rise of the Ayyubīd Sultanate in Egypt no doubt meant for both Arabs and Nubians new masters as well as a new policy, the outcome of which could not be predicted. However, the change of power had always induced the Nubians (and all other resenting elements), to check the power of the

new regime in Egypt. Thus the Ayyubīds had to face a number of risings among the Arab tribes in Upper Egypt and several attacks launched by the Nubians at their southern frontiers. The outcome of these encounters was in favour of the Ayyubīds who crushed all Arab risings in Upper Egypt and secured the southern frontier against Nubian attacks.

Historians, however, mention another motive for this Ayyubīd concern about Nubia. It is assumed that Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn al-Ayyūbī "... was planning to retreat either to Nubia or to the Yemen, thus ensuring for himself a refuge in case he should be ousted from Egypt by his overlord Nūr al-Dīn Zankī".²⁴ But it seems that the poverty of Nubia, as reported by a special emissary of Ṣalāḥ al-Dīn, did not encourage such a course.²⁵

The rise of the Mamlūks to power in Egypt after the fall of the Ayyubīds was for the Arab tribes in Egypt, perhaps, a catastrophe. But for the Sudan it was no doubt a new turn in the destiny of that country, then it brought about the Arabization and Islamization of most parts of the Sudan. Not long after the accession of the Mamlūks to power the Arabs in Egypt expressed their resentment and rose in revolt and refused to pay land-tax. The reaction of the Mamlūks to this rebellion was both prompt and ruthless. Mamlūk armies marched against the rebels, and in very severe campaigns they put many to sword, took many others as captives and plundered their regions.²⁶ Those who escaped death took to flight towards Nubia; and this leads us to discuss the relations of the Mamlūks with Nubia.

When King Dawood of Nubia in 667 A.H. sent a mission to the Mamlūk Sultan Baybars, the latter took this opportunity and "demanded the immediate delivery of the Baqt".²⁷ This demand renewed the old enmity of the Nubian king towards Muslim interference in his country. He reacted by attacking the port of 'Aydḥāb on the Red Sea coast, and Aswan,²⁸ both being of the dominions of the Mamlūks. The opportunity for Baybars to punish these Nubian attacks showed itself when a Nubian Prince with the name Shakanda "came to the court of Baybars seeking help against his cousin Dawood, who had usurped the throne".²⁹ The Nubian Prince was immediately sent in the company of a Mamlūk expedition towards Dunqula. King Dawood led his people and met this expedition in a battle outside his capital. In spite of their big numbers, the Nubians were no match for the well trained and strong Mamlūk-fighters. His troops thus routed and scattered, King Dawood took to flight leaving his throne to be taken by Shakanda under the protection of the Mamlūks.

The Mamlūks were quite harsh in their dealings with the Nubians. On one hand the Nubians had to choose between the adoption of Islam, war, or payment of the Jizya.³⁰ They chose the third offer. On the other hand both king and people were put under the complete authority of the Mamlūk Sultan. The Nubian king Shakanda was also forbidden to give refuge to any Arab Nomads.³¹

The Mamlūks did not destroy the Church of Dunqula, but they deprived it of all its treasures including a valuable golden cross. On its way back the Mamlūk army also took with it twenty Nubian Princes who were kept as hostages in Cairo.

The Mamlūk campaign on Nubia and the severe measures that followed it were no doubt an important step on the way of Arab migration carrying the Islamic faith to the Sudan. Then Christian Nubia had for centuries stood as a great obstacle in the path of Islam to that country. Now the Mamlūks completely annexed and Islamized the northern part of Nubia known as al-Marīs. Dunqula, on the other hand, was subjected to an indirect control by the Mamlūks through their continuous interference in the internal affairs of that kingdom. The several campaigns that they sent against Dunqula induced a large number of Arab tribes to leave Egypt for the Sudan, "in order to find relief from the oppressive rule of the Mamlūks in Egypt".³²

During the Sultanate of Qalā'ūn and his son al-Ashraf Khalīl, the Mamlūks were occupied with the Crusades that endangered their dominions in Syria. Nevertheless, they did not neglect the southern parts and they were anxious that Nubia remained calm and loyal, and that the Nubian king paid the due tribute regularly. The presence of a number of Nubian Princes in Cairo as hostages and refugees made it easy for the Mamlūks to play the game of changing a monarch for another one, whenever the Nubian king held back the tribute or was disloyal. This happened many times. But in 715 A.H. (1315 A.D.), when the Sultan decided to send a Nubian Prince to replace the rebellious king, he chose a Nubian Prince who had adopted Islam during his stay in Cairo. This was Prince Sayf al-Dīn 'Abdallāh Barshambu.³³ Although Sayf al-Dīn did not stay long on the throne as king, due to the rivalry of other pretenders, yet the ascendancy of a Muslim to the throne of Nubia was a good indication that the kingdom of Dunqula was on its way to Islamization. In fact king Sayf al-Dīn "marked his succession to the throne by converting into a mosque a two-storey church situated in the capital itself - an event commemorated in an inscription which conveys that the mosque was opened by Sayf al-Dīn 'Abdallāh al-Nāṣir on 16 Rabī' I, 717/29 May 1317".³⁴

The presence of many Arabs who settled there and intermarried with the local inhabitants was also another important factor in the creation of a new Islamized generation. Soon there was no need to send a Muslim prince from Cairo to occupy the throne. Instead the Arabs made use of the matrilineal system of succession that was "common among the inhabitants of the Sudan and by virtue of which the Arabs became the rulers of Nubia".³⁵

The fall of the two northern Nubian kingdoms removed from the path of the Arab tribes a great obstacle that for centuries hindered their penetration into the rich pastures of the Sudan. As has been mentioned previously, the interior parts of the Sudan, where the third Christian kingdom of 'Alwa prevailed, had very little contact with Egypt and the northern parts of Nubia. The most important link that tied 'Alwa with its sister-kingdoms and with Egypt, prior to the conquest of Egypt by the Muslims, was the religious leadership imposed by the Church of Alexandria on the Church of 'Alwa (and of course on the other Nubian Churches). The fact that Egypt since 640 A.D. had been Muslim, no doubt helped a great deal to weaken this religious relationship between the Church of Alexandria and the Nubian Churches. We saw how this, in the course of time, led to the fall of the two northern kingdoms and to their *Islamization*. This had its effect on the kingdom and Church of 'Alwa.

“Deprived of the guidance of the Mother Church and exposed to the growing influence of the Muslim faith, the Christian Church of ‘Alwa gradually withered away”.³⁶

Besides, the Arab nomads, who now settled in thousands around the kingdom of ‘Alwa, intermarried with the local inhabitants and acquired the rule of the many chieftains by virtue of the matrilineal system of succession mentioned above. The kingdom of ‘Alwa must have felt the danger that surrounded it. Nevertheless, its kings tried to impose their power on their Muslim subjects by demanding heavy taxes. This and the fact that their rulers were Christians were enough to provoke the Arabs. “The movement was led by a certain ‘Abdallāh of the Qawasima, a branch of the Rufa’a Arabs”.³⁷ He was said to have invited the Arab tribes to gather against their common enemy, and this is why he is nicknamed “ ‘Abdallāh Jammā’, or the Gatherer”.³⁸ The result of this Arab alliance was the annihilation of the kingdom of ‘Alwa and the complete destruction of its capital Soba.³⁹ This happened at the end of the ninth century A.H. (fifteenth century A.D.) But the ‘Abdallābi, i.e. the family of ‘Abdallāh Jammā’ did not enjoy their victory for long. By the beginning of the tenth century A.H. (sixteenth century A.D.) a new people known as the Funj⁴⁰ appeared in the fertile southern part of the Gezira (between the Blue and the White Niles). At the decisive battle of Arbaji (c. 910/1504) “... the Funj reduced the ‘Abdallābi chiefs to the position of viceroys”.⁴¹ Thus the year 1504 marked the beginning of the first organized Muslim state that united most of the parts of the Sudan. “This unity led to a measure of political stability that, under the Islamized Funj in partnership with the ‘Abdallāb Arabs, had a profound influence on the spread of Islam and the growth of Arab prestige in the Sudan”.⁴²

The rise of an Islamic state in the Sudan was very important for the propagation of Islam orthodox. Until then the Islamization of the people of the Sudan had relied on the efforts of the traders and the Arab nomads who migrated into the Sudan. Those efforts resulted in the conversion of the majority of the population of that country to Islam. However, most of those who adopted Islam did not know much about it. Most of the teachings of Islam remained unknown to them. This state of ignorance continued until the beginning of the Funj kingdom. It is well described by the author⁴³ of the main source which deals with this period. He says that by the time the Funj kingdom arose “... there flourished neither schools of learning nor reading of the Qur’an; it is said that a man might divorce his wife and she be married by another man the self-same day without any period of probation (‘idda) until Shaykh Maḥmud al-‘Araki came from Egypt and taught the people to observe the laws of the ‘idda ... then in the second half of the tenth century A.H. (sixteenth century A.D.) Shaykh Ibrahim al-Bulaqi came from Egypt to the Sha’iqiya country where he taught Khalil and the Risala,⁴⁴ whence learning and knowledge of law spread to the Jezira. Then after a short time Shaykh Taj al-Din al-Bahari came from Baghdad and introduced the path of the Sufis into the Funj country”.

Thus, it is clear that the rise of an Islamic kingdom in the Sudan attracted many ‘*ulama* (learned men) to come to this country. “Some might have been moved by a

noble ambition to further the cause of Islam; others were probably induced by the hope of a better career in the newly Islamized kingdom".⁴⁵

It is also important to bear in mind that the rise of the Funj Islamic kingdom in the Sudan (1504) almost coincided with the fall of the Arab Islamic State in Spain (1492). A number of the *'ulama* who were forced to leave Spain found in the Sudan and in the new Islamic power of the Funj a suitable refuge.⁴⁶ The Funj kings, on the other hand, were also anxious to gather around them as many *'ulama* and Sufis as possible. Another factor which played an important role in strengthening the Islamic faith in the Sudan were the ties that bound the Funj kingdom to the Hijaz during the pilgrimage; as a matter of fact these contacts also induced a number of the *'ulama* of the Hijaz to emigrate to the Sudan.

Conclusion :

The first attempt of the Muslims to conquer the northern parts of the Sudan (Nubia), a short time after the conquest of Egypt, resulted in a peace treaty which marked the relations between the two sides for seven centuries. The resistance they met, the poverty of Nubia, and, perhaps, the unknown world that lay behind it, did not encourage the Muslims to insist on conquering the Sudan at that time.

During the times of the Tulunids, the Ikhshidids, the Fatimids and the Ayyubids there was no radical change in the relations of Nubia with the Muslim government in Egypt. However, a slow, but an unbroken flow of Arab traders and Arab tribes into the Sudan was a clear feature of all these epochs. It was a peaceful process. But by the time the Mamluks came to power in Egypt things had changed a lot. On one side, the aggressive policy of the Mamluks towards the Arabs in Upper Egypt forced thousands of them to immigrate to the Sudan, and on the other side the campaigns of the Mamluks against Nubia were joined by many Arab nomads who were settled there. Thus, the Mamluks succeeded in achieving the Arabization and Islamization of the two northern Christian kingdoms of Nubia. In that way they opened the gates of the Sudan for more and more Arab migrations and enabled them to complete the process of Arabization and Islamization in the vast wide parts of the Sudan quite peacefully.

Notes :

1. Hasan Suleiman Maḥmūd and Jalāl Darwish: "*Tārīkh al-Sūdān fī 'l-'uṣūr al-qadīma*" (A History of the Sudan in Ancient Times), Cairo, (without date), P. 34. Al-Shāṭir Buṣāily 'Abd al-Jalīl: "*Tārīkh wa ḥaḍārāt as-Sūdān al-Sharqī wa 'l-awsaṭ*" (The History and Civilization of the Eastern and Central Sudan), Cairo (1972), P. 68.
2. The 'Atbara River is a tributary of the Nile which flows from the Ethiopian Highlands.
3. Ibn Sulaim al-Aswānī, 'Abdallāh b. Aḥmad, a Fatimid *dā'i* (propagandist), author of *Kitāb Akhbār al-Nūba wa 'l-Mukurra wa 'Alwa wa 'l-Budja wa 'l-Nil*. He was sent on a special mission to Nubia by Djawhar al-Ṣikillī, probably 365/975. He persuaded king George of Nubia to resume the delivery of the *bakī*, which had lately been withheld, but failed in debate to convert the court to Islam. See *Encyclopedia of Islam*, New Edition, Leiden/London (1971), vol. III, P. 949.

4. MacMichael, H.A.: "A History of the Arabs in the Sudan", 2 vols., London (1967), vol. I, P. 47.
5. Ibid; al-Shāṭir Buṣaylī: op.cit. P. 96.
6. Yūsuf Faḍl Ḥasan: "The Arabs and the Sudan", third ed., Khartoum University Press (1973), P. 8.
7. MacMichael: op.cit., vol. I, P. 4.
8. Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 12.
9. 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ, who adopted Islam in the year 8 A.H., became one of the famous leaders of Islam. He was the leader of the army which conquered and opened Palestine. Afterwards he was given the leadership of the army sent to Egypt by the second caliph 'Umar b. al-Khaṭṭāb.
10. 'Abdallāh b. Sa'd b. Abī Sarḥ was one of the Makkans who adopted Islam in the first years of the Prophet's mission. However, a short time after the Hijrah he fell back from Islam and returned to Makkah. When the Prophet opened Makkah in the year 8 A.H., he ordered him to be put to death. But 'Uthman b. 'Affan asked the Prophet to spare his life and the Prophet pardoned him. During the Caliphates of 'Umar and 'Uthman, 'Abdallāh b. Sa'd became one of the prominent leaders of the Muslims; see: Ibn Hishām, Muḥammad: *al-Sira al-Nabawiya*, two vols., Cairo (without date), vol. II, P. 409.
11. Ḥasan: op.cit., pp. 18-19. al-Ya'qūbī: *Tārikh al-Ya'qūbī*, two vols., Beirut (without date), vol. I, P. 191; al-Ya'qūbī says that 'Amr b. al-'Āṣ sent 'Uqba b. Nāfi' al-Fihri with an army against Nubia.
12. Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 19. al-Ya'qūbī: op.cit., vol. II, P. 156. Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, 'Abd al-Rahmān b. 'Abdallāh: "*Futūḥ Miṣr wa 'l-Maghrib*", edited by 'Abd al-Mun'im 'Āmir, Cairo (1961), P. 253. Al-Balāduri, Aḥmad b. Yahyā b. Jābir: "*Futūḥ al-Buldān*", edited by Riḍwān Muḥammad Riḍwān, Cairo (1959), P. 238.
13. Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 24. Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam: op.cit., PP. 253-54. al-Balāduri: op.cit., P. 239. al-Ya'qūbī: op.cit., vol. II, P. 166. Al-Mas'ūdī, Abū 'l-Ḥasan 'Alī b. al-Ḥusein: *Murūj al-Dhahab wa Ma'ādin al-Jawhar*", four vols., edited by Muḥammad Muḥyī al-Dīn, 4th Edition, Cairo (1384) (1964), vol. II, P. 21. 'Āshūr, Sa'id 'Abd al-Fattāh: "*Al-'Asr al-Mamlūkī fī Miṣr wa 'l-Shām*", second Ed., Cairo (1976), PP. 77-78.
14. This translation is taken from MacMichael: op.cit., vol. I, PP. 157-58.
15. The *Baqṭ* is probably a loan word of Latin origin through the Byzantine Greek, which was used in the Byzantine Empire to mean "a compact of mutual obligation and its connected payments"; see: Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 24. Crawford, O.G.S.: "*The Fūnj Kingdom of Sennār*", Gloucester (1951), PP. 21-22. Cp. al-Mas'ūdī: op.cit., vol. II, P. 21. 'Āshūr: op.cit., P. 78.
16. Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 25.
17. Ibid, P. 36. 'Abd al-Majeed 'Ābdeen: "*Tārikh al-Thaqāfa al-'Arabiya fī 'l-Sūdān*" (A History of the Arabic Culture in the Sudan), second Ed., Beirut (1967), P. 37.
18. Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 37.
19. MacMichael: op.cit., vol. I, P. 160.
20. Shebeika, Makki: "*al-Sūdān 'Abr al-Qurūn*", Beirut (1964), P. 37; Shebeika, however, mentions that the name of the Nubian king was George. See also: 'Abd al-Mun'im Mājid: "*Zuhūr Khilāfat al-Fātimīyyīn wa suqūṭihā fī Miṣr*" (The rise and fall of the Fātimid Caliphate in Egypt, political History), Alexandria (1968), P. 235.
21. See Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 92.
22. Ibid, P. 95.
23. 'Abd al-Mun'im Mājid: op.cit., PP. 394-95. Muḥammad Jamāl al-Dīn Surūr: "*Al-Dawlah al-Fātimīyya fī Miṣr*" (The Fātimid State in Egypt), Cairo (1390H) (1970), P. 109.
24. Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 97. 'Āshūr: op.cit., P. 79.
25. Ḥasan: Ibid. Al-Maqdisī, Shihāb al-Dīn Abū Muḥammad: "*Al-Rawḍatayn fī akhbār al-Dawlatain*", one vol., two sections, Beirut (without date), sec I, P. 209.
26. Ḥasan: op.cit., PP. 100-103. 'Āshūr: op.cit., PP. 326-330.
27. Ibid.
28. Ḥasan: Ibid. 'Āshūr: op.cit., P. 80.
29. Ibid, P. 108; P. 81.
30. Shebeika: op.cit., P. 34. 'Āshūr: op.cit., P. 82.
31. Shebeika: op.cit., P. 44.

32. Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 114. 'Āshūr: op.cit., PP. 326-330.
33. Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 118. Shebeika: op.cit., P. 50. Al-Shāṭir Buṣāily: op.cit., P. 109. 'Āshūr: op.cit., PP. 97-98.
34. In fact king 'Abdallāh marked his succession to the throne by converting into a mosque a two-storey Church situated in the capital itself, an event commemorated in an inscription which conveys that the mosque was opened by Sayf al-Dīn 'Abdallāh al-Nāṣir on 16 Rabī' 1717 A.H. (29 May 1317); see Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 125. 'Āshūr: Ibid.
35. Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 118. 'Āshūr: op.cit., P. 98.
36. Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 131.
37. Ibid, P. 132, 159: "The Rufā'a are generally classed among the Juhayna group".
38. Ibid, 132. Shebeika: op.cit., P. 65.
39. Crawford: op.cit., P. 152. Ḥasan, Yūsuf Faḍl: "*Muqaddima fi Tārīkh al-Mamālik al-Islāmīya fi 'l-Sūdān al-Sharqī, 1450-1821*" (An introduction to the History of the Islamic States in the Eastern Sudan), second Ed., Khartoum (1392H) (1972), PP. 26-28. Shebeika: op.cit., P. 55.
40. The origin of the Funj is still a matter of controversy. There are different views about their origin: They were held to be either Shilluk from the Upper White Nile region, from Bornu, from Abyssinia, or even to be the descendants of the Umayyads who fled to the Sudan in face of the 'Abbāsids. Crawford (op.cit., PP. 143-155) gives a summary of these different views. See also: Ḥasan: op.cit., PP. 173-74. Shebeika: op.cit., PP. 62-65. Al-Shāṭir Buṣāily: op.cit., PP. 206-212.
41. Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 134.
42. Ibid.
43. Muḥammad al-Nūr b. Ḍaifallāh: "*Kitāb al-Ṭabaqāt*". edited by Yūsuf Faḍl Ḥasan, second edition, Khartoum University Press, (1974), P. 41. See also: Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 179. Shebeika: op.cit., PP. 67-68. Al-Shāṭir Buṣāily: op.cit., P. 250. Crawford: op.cit., P. 29. Aḥmad b. al-Ḥāj Abū 'Alī: "*Makhtūṭāt Kātib al-Shūna fi Tārīkh al-Sulṭana al-Sinnārīya wa 'l-idāra al-Miṣrīya*", edited by al-Shāṭir Buṣāily 'Abd al-Jalīl, revised by Maḥmūd Muṣṭafā Ziyāda, Cairo (1961), P. 5.
44. Those are two of the most important works of the 'ulamā of the Mālikī School; the "*Mukhtasar of Khalīl*", written by Khalīl b. Ishāq (d.776/1374), and the "*Kitāb al-Risāla*" of Ibn Abī Zaid al-Qairawānī (310-386/922-96).
45. Ḥasan: op.cit., P. 180. Al-Shāṭir Buṣāily: op.cit., pp. 254-274.
46. 'Abd al-Majeed 'Ābdeen: op.cit., PP. 48, 57-58.

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انتشار الإسلام في السودان

الدكتور . صلاح التجاني حمودي *

ملخص البحث

الرغم من أن جيوش المسلمين الفاتحة وصلت إلى حدود السودان الشمالية في فترة مبكرة جداً ، وذلك عقب فتح مصر مباشرة ، إلا أن انتشار الدعوة الإسلامية ، في السودان ، استغرق قرونا طويلة ؛ لأسباب عدة ؛ منها : طبيعة المنطقة الشمالية الجغرافية ، وفقر هذه المنطقة ، والمقاومة الشديدة ، التي أبداها سكانها لأولى حركات الفتح الإسلامي ، أضف إلى ذلك أن المسلمين كانوا في هذه الفترة يركزون نشاطهم على عمليات الفتح الإسلامي في شمال أفريقيا ، وبلاد فارس .

لقد ارتبط تاريخ الأجزاء الشمالية ، من السودان ، منذ أقدم العصور ، بتاريخ مصر ، وكانت آخر هذه الروابط ، قبل الفتح الإسلامي لمصر ، هي ارتباط مصر والسودان برابطة الدين المسيحي ؛ حيث قامت في السودان ثلاث ممالك مسيحية ؛ اثنتان منهما ببلاد النوبة ، في شمال السودان ، والثالثة على النيل الأزرق ، بالقرب من موقع الخرطوم الحالي . وكانت كنائسها ترتبط ارتباطا وثيقا بكنيسة الإسكندرية . وعندما فتح المسلمون مصر ضعفت هذه الصلة الروحية ، كما أن القبائل العربية بدأت تتسرب إلى داخل بلاد السودان ، إما طلبا للمرعى ، وبحثا عن بيئة تشبه بيئة بلاد العرب ، أو هربا من القيود والضرائب ، التي كانت تفرضها عليهم بعض أنظمة الحكم ، التي قامت في مصر ، وبخاصة المماليك .

وبمرور الزمن ، وتحت الضربات الموجهة من المماليك والقبائل العربية ، سقطت مملكتنا الشمال المسيحية ، مما أزاح عقبة رئيسة من طريق القبائل العربية ؛ لتتوغل إلى الأجزاء الداخلية ، من بلاد السودان ؛ لتجد المملكة المسيحية الثالثة نفسها محاطة بها ؛ كالسوار من المعصم ، وفي النهاية ، وعن طريق التزاوج تغلب العنصر العربي المسلم ، ووجهت الضربة القاضية إلى مملكة « سوبا » المسيحية في معركة « أريجي » حوالي عام ١٥٠٤م ، وقامت على أنقاضها أول مملكة عربية إسلامية في السودان ؛ وهي مملكة الفونج ، أو سلطنة « سنار » وتسمى كذلك السلطنة الزرقاء ، وقد لعبت هذه المملكة دورا كبيرا في نشر العقيدة الإسلامية في السودان ، كما عملت على جعل اللغة العربية لغة التخاطب الرئيسة للبلاد .

على