



حبر أبيض  
WHITE INK



**Muhammad Al-Saed**

## Courage of Moroccans in the Face of Suleiman the Magnificent Treachery

Once Ottoman Mongols had arrived in the land of Algeria, they extended east towards Tunisia; then west towards Tlemcen which they occupied maltreated its people. This forced its prince to flee to Fez seeking the help of Saadi Sultanate. Saadi Sultanate extended from the south of the desert to the Atlantic Ocean in the west with a very vast shore. One of the greedy ambitions and major aspirations of Ottomans was to reach the water of that shore to which Saadi Sultanate was a hurdle.

Reaching the Atlantic Ocean was a huge juncture in the progression of Ottomans as they became able, for the first time, to control a wide land that was located on two oceans at the same time, the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic Ocean. Such status gave them influence and many ways to their naval fleet. It would also make their rival western powers like, Spain, France, and Russia at that time, deal with Turks very cautiously.

Due to the racist policy of Ottomans, as well as their mismanagement, they made the Arab people, their host, hate them and their presence because of their massacres and crimes against local population. Libyan history professor, Ahmed Al-Barasi, described the centuries during which Ottoman Empire has controlled North Africa as sadistic eras saying, "Ottomans were masters of torture. Impalement was not enough for them as they created other ways such as cutting ears. Their policy was impoverishing and humiliating the people of the countries they occupied, and ignite tribal strife among them using trivial causes from the perspective of "divide and rule" policy".

As for Saadi and Ottoman Sultanates, they have not had any relationship ever. Rather, the news of Andalusians who were left for their inevitable fate by Ottomans because of Istanbul preference to its relations with Christian capitals came to Saadi Sultanate and spread among people who were very scared of the arrival of Turks to their country borders. The massacres that were perpetrated in Tunisia and Algeria terrified people and revealed the hidden face of a bloody sultanate that claimed to be a Caliphate Sultanate, and alleged that it protected Islam and Muslims.

Such strained relationship, as well as mistrust and refusal to be subject to Ottoman domination prompted Astana to intervene by hatching plots; by fueling internal unrest and intervening in several occasions; or by supporting claimants of Morocco throne in order to destabilize the regime. Not only did they do the previous points but they also paid for a coup against, or the assassination of Sultan Al- Saadi Abu Abdullah Al- Sheikh as he was the sultan who rejected their intervention the most; and because he has led the battle of rejecting Ottoman influence over his country.

All this has driven Ottomans to launch many military campaigns and raids deep into the land of Saadi Sultanate. Moroccans have cleverly encountered all Ottoman attempts and were able to manage their crisis with Ottoman Sultanate through a lot of sacrifices, politics and diplomacy due to their relations with influential capitals at that time. In addition, they pacified strifes and conspiracies that did not stop.

An important historical event that is worth noting here with regard to the relationship history between authentic Arab Maghreb and Ottoman arrogance as Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent has sent a delegation to Sultan Abu Abdullah Al- Sheikh Al- Saadi asking him to pledge allegiance to him as the Commander of the Faithful; to pray for him on pulpits; and to call him the Caliph of Muslims. Thus, Al- Saadi should be one of his followers, and his Sultanate should be one of Ottoman States.

Sultan Mohammed Al- Sheikh understood the intention of Suleiman the Magnificent so he carefully considered Arouj Pasha and his brother, as well as their crimes and murders of Algerian Sultans and people which were still repeated. Ottomans usually infiltrated claiming friendship, then, they started occupation, killing and intimidation. Therefore, his reply was decisive, brave and strong which Suleiman the Magnificent did not expect. The reply wording was as follows: "Give my greetings to your pirate Sultan (Sultan of boats), and tell him that, Sultan of Morocco will for sure dispute with you to rule Egypt and so will be his fighting with you in this regard, if God wills; and he will come to you in Egypt".

Ottoman arrogance could not accept such insult as Al- Saadi described Suleiman the Magnificent saying that he was a mere pirate who infiltrated using boats in order to occupy countries and dispute with their people in order to rob them of its sovereignty. At that time, Suleiman the Magnificent decided to assassinate Abu Abdullah Al- Sheikh who was difficult to defeat in a military way. Thus, a group of Turkish soldiers infiltrated under the pretext that they have fled from Ottoman army and joined the army of Sultan Al- Saadi. Then, they seized the opportunity when the Sultan went on a hunting trip accompanied with a few group of his guards so they singled him out and cut his head in an assassinating and betraying way. They took his head to Istanbul where it was hung on its gates and so that Suleiman the Magnificent could celebrate his alleged victory that was based on treachery and deceit.

The assassination of Sultan Sheikh was not the end of the strained relationship between Ottomans and Saadis. Ottoman ambitions did not stop; they rather gave them a chance to intervene once more through the destabilized regime, and support the internal coups when they supported other claims of Al- Saadi throne. Such Ottoman way of ruling and controlling has been repeated in several Ottoman States. By supporting throne claimants, they threatened the position of the governor who was subject to and approached the Sultanate fearing that Ottoman would support his rivals. Therefore, both parties do all humility and subjection they could in order to get the blessing of the state Sultan. Moreover, there was a parallel rule through advanced Turkish garrisons that were subject to Janissaries who turned to prominent figures overpowering money and influence, while local governor was a mere Sultan slave.