## Spread of Islam in West Africa

Islam reached the Savannah region in the 8th Century C.E., the date the written history of West Africa begins The Muslim-Arab historians began to write about West Africa in the early 8th century.  The famous scholar Ibn Munabbah wrote as early as 738 C.E., followed by Al-Masudi in 947 C.E.  As Islam spread in the Savannah region, it was quite natural that commercial links should also come to be established with North Africa.  Trade and commerce also paved way for the introduction of new elements of material culture, and made possible the intellectual development which naturally followed the introduction and spread of literacy, and for which parts of the Sudan were to become famous in the centuries to come.  In the Kingdom of Tekur, situated on both banks of the Senegal, Islam was accepted as early as 850 C.E., by the Dya’ogo dynasty.  This dynasty was the first Negro people who accepted Islam.

It was for this reason that Muslim-Arab historians referred to Bilad al-Tekur as ‘The Land of the Black Muslims.’  War-jabi, was the first ruler of Tekur in whose reign Islam was firmly established in Tekur and the Islamic Shari’ah system was enforced.  This gave a uniform Muslim law to the people.  By the time the Al- Murabitun of Almoravids began their attack on Tekur in 1042 C.E., Islam had made a deep impact on the people of that area.  Al-Idrisi in 1511 described the Tekur Country as ‘secure, peaceful and tranquil.’  The capital town of Tekur was also called Tekur which had become center of commerce.  Merchants used to bring wool to sell there from Greater Morocco and in return, took with them gold and beads.