CHAPTER X BIOGRAPHIES OF THE SCHOLARS OF TIMBUKTU

In his work entitled Edz-Dzil {2}, the very learned jurisconsult Ahmed-Baba (God have mercy on him!) expresses himself thus: Ahmed-ben-'Omar-ben-Mohammed-Aqît-ben-'Omar-ben-'Ali-ben-Yahya-ben-Godâla {3}, the Senhadjian, the Timbuktu, was my grandfather, the father of my father; he was known as El-Hâdj-Ahmed. He was the eldest of three brothers who distinguished themselves by their science and piety in their country. He was a good man, virtuous and pious, possessing in his memory the Sonna; [61] he was well brought up, chaste, distinguished, full of love for the Prophet, and constantly compelled to read the poems in honour of Mohammed and the Shifa of ‘Iyàd. He was a jurisconsult, lexicographer, grammarian, prosodist, and scholar, and was occupied with science all his life. His books were numerous, written in his own hand with copious annotations. At his death he left about 700 volumes. He had studied under his maternal grandfather, the jurisconsult Anda-Ag-Mohammed, and under his maternal uncle, the jurisconsult El-Mokhtâr, the grammarian, and under other masters as well.

He travelled to the East in the year 890 (1485) and made the pilgrimage to Mecca. There he met El-Jelâl-Es-Soyouti and Sheikh Khâled-El-Ouaqqâd-El-Azhari, the prince of the grammarians, and other characters. He returned at the time of the revolt of the Karedi Sovni-'Ali, visited Kano and other cities of the Sudan. He taught theology and was successful in his teaching, from which many people benefited, among whom the most illustrious was the jurisconsult Mahmud, to whom he taught, among other things, the Modaouana {1}. He was an outstanding scholar and teacher. He worked until his death, which occurred on a Thursday evening in the month of rebi' II in the year 943 September-October 1536); he was then about 80 years old. He was offered the position of Imam, but he refused it, as well as other lesser jobs.

One of his most famous miracles is the following: When he visited the noble tomb (of the Prophet), he asked (٣٨) to go inside the monument. The guard prevented him from doing so. He then sat outside and began to praise the Prophet. Immediately the door opened by itself without any apparent cause. The door was opened without any apparent cause, and people rushed around him [62] to kiss his hand. And so I have heard this story told by several people {1}.

Abdallah-ben-'Omar-ben-Mohammed-Aqît ben-'Omar-ben-'Ali-ben-Yahya, the Senhadjian, the Messoufite. -He was the first-born brother of my grandfather, of whom I have just spoken, a jurisconsult, a scholar, an ascetic, a modest man, a virtuous man, a holy man, of the greatest reserve, of the greatest piety, and gifted with an excellent memory, he taught in Oualâten. He died in this city in the year 929 (1522- 1523); he was born in 866 (1461-1462). He performed a few miracles {2}.

Mahmoud-ben-'Omar-ben-Mohammed-Aqît ben-'Omar- ben-'Ali-ben-Yahya-ben-Godâla, the Senhadjian, the Timbuktu, cadi of Timbuktu, this father of praise and beautiful deeds was par excellence and without question the scholar, saint, teacher, jurisconsult and imam of the country of Tekrour.3 He was one of the best creatures of God among the saints and scholars in God. He had an energetic firmness in all things, a perfect orthodoxy, calmness, dignity and majesty.

His knowledge and virtues were famous in the country, and his fame had spread to all the lands, east, west, south and north. The gifts of heaven were manifested in his piety, his virtues, his asceticism and his cheerfulness. He was not afraid of criticism from any quarter when it came to the commands of God. He was respected by all; the Sultan as well as the lesser personages were at his command; they visited him in his house, and asked his blessing without his bothering them. People brought him money and gifts. He was liberal and generous.

He was appointed cadi in the year 904 (1498-1499). He rendered justice in all matters, being energetic in favour of the right and threatening those who were wrong. His justice was so famous that no one was known to rival him in this respect at that time. He was also a teacher. The law in his mouth was gentle and easy, easy to understand, quick to assimilate, and imposing no fatigue {1}. Many people benefited from his lessons. Thanks to him, science was alive in his country; more students of law came to him; many of them distinguished themselves in this study and became true scholars. The subjects that he made them study were: the Modaouana, the Risala {2}, the Mokhtasar of Khelil, the Alfiya {3}, the Seláldjiya. He was the propagator of Khelil's work in the Sudan and covered his copy with annotations which one of his pupils published in the form of a commentary in two volumes.

He made the pilgrimage to Mecca in the year 915 (1510), and was in contact, during this journey, with such masters as: Ibrahim-El-Moqadessi, Sheikh Zakariya, El-Qalqachandi (disciples of Ibn-Hadjar), the two El-Laqqâni and others. There he made his merits appreciated, then he returned to his country where he applied himself to make himself useful (٣٩) and to make the right triumph. His life was long and he knew both fathers and sons.

He taught for about fifty years and did not stop until his death in 955 on Thursday evening, the 16th of the month of Ramadan (19 October 1548). He attained a high degree of fame and enjoyed a very high reputation. The fame [64] of his virtues reached a point that no one else reached. He was born in the year 868 (1463-1464). He was the teacher of my father (God have mercy on him!), of three of his children, the cadis Mohammed, El-'Aqib and 'Omar and of many others.

Makhlouf-ben-'Ali-ben-Sâlih-El-Belbâli. - He was a jurisconsult and a geographer {1}, but it is said that he did not start studying until he was very old. The first of his teachers was the virtuous Sidi Abdallah-ben-'Omar-ben Mohammed-Aqît, the first brother of my grandfather who was then in Oualâten. He first studied Risâla, then his master saw that he had great dispositions and encouraged him to continue his studies. Full of enthusiasm, he left for Morocco where he studied under Ibn-Ghazi and others. He was famous for the power of his memory and, in this regard, astonishing things are said.

He travelled through the country of Sudan, went to Kano, Kachena, etc. He taught in these various places and had discussions about known trials with the jurisconsult El-Aqib-El-Ansamanni. Then he went to Timbuktu where he also taught, then he returned to Morocco and taught a course in the city of Merrâkech. He was poisoned in this city, fell ill and returned to his homeland where he died after the year 940 (1533-1534) {2}.

Mohammed-ben-Ahmed-ben-'Abou-Mohammed-Et-Tazakhti, known as Aïda-Ahmed. - Aida, which is written with a hamza accompanied by an a, a ya without vowels, a dal with a vowel, is related to the name Ahmed and means son. He was a jurisconsult, a theologian, a traditionalist, a very wise and learned man, an excellent calligrapher, and a man who was very inclined to discussion with his lively intelligence. He studied in his country under my grandfather, the jurisconsult El-Hâdj-Ahmed-ben-'Omar, and under his maternal uncle, the jurisconsult 'Ali, and he became a scholar.

At Takeda he met Imam El-Moghili {1} and attended his classes, then he went to the East in company with the jurisconsult Sidi Mahmud and had occasion to enter into relations with illustrious scholars, such as: the sheikh-el-islam Zakariya, the dialectician El-Qalqachandi, Ibn-'Abou-Shérif, Abdelhaq-Es-Soubâți and many others. He took from them lessons in hadith, listened to their oral teaching (٤٠) and their discussions; he profited so much from them that he was a distinguished teacher in all matters and deserved the title of traditionist.

He attended the classes of the two brothers El-Laqqâni and became friends with Ahmed-ben-Mohammed and Abdelhaqq-Es-Soubâți. In Mecca he received diplomas from the father of the blessings En-Nuairi, the latter's paternal cousin Abdelqader, Ali-ben-Naser-El-Hidjâzi, Abu-'t-Tayyeb-El-Bosţi and others. He then returned to the Sudan and settled in Kachena, whose sultan treated him with respect and entrusted him with the duties of cadi. He died around the year 936 (1529-1530), aged sixty or so. He is the author of annotations and marginal notes on the text of the Mokhtasar of Sheikh Khelil {2}.

Mohammed-ben-Mahmoud-ben-'Omar-ben-Mohammed-Aqît-ben-'Omar-ben-'Ali-ben-Yahya, the Senhadjian, cadi of Timbuktu. - He was a very intelligent and sagacious jurisconsult, and his keen mind made him one of the most sensible and wise men. He succeeded [66] his father in the office of cadi. He had a very good fortune; he obtained all the honours he desired and amassed considerable property. He made a commentary on the poem in redjez of El-Moghili on logic. My father had studied rhetoric and logic under him. He died in the month of Safar of the year 973 (September 1565); he was born in 909 (1503- 1504).

El-Agîb-ben-Mahmoud-ben-'Omar-ben-Mohammed-Aqît-ben-'Omar-ben-'Ali-ben-Yahya, the Senhadjian, cadi of Timbuktu. - From a family of scholars and clergymen, he rendered justly reasoned judgments. He was firm in the path of law and did not fear any criticism when it came to the prescriptions of God. He was very energetic and enterprising in the matters he dealt with, and resisted the Sultan as well as others, and took no notice of their observations. He had, in this connection, a number of adventures. Everyone humbled themselves before him, feared him, and obeyed everything he wanted. When he saw something he didn't like, he withdrew to the side, closed his door, and it was necessary to be very careful until he came back. This happened frequently.

Gifted with great foresight in business, his perspicacity was never in doubt; it was as if he could see into the future. Very comfortable with his fortune, happy in all his undertakings, he was considered, feared and highly respected. He took lessons from (٤١) his father and his paternal uncle. He made the pilgrimage to Mecca and then saw En-Nâsir-El-Laqqâni, 'Abu'-l-Hasen-El-Bekri, Sheikh El-Baikouri' and their colleagues. He was given diplomas by El-Laqqâni on all the subjects he taught, either from his own sources or from those of his teachers. He issued me {1} with the same diplomas written in his own hand. He was born in 913 (1507) and died in the month of Redjeb in the year 991 (August 1583) {2}.

El-'Aqît-ben-Abdallah-El-Ansammani, the Messoufite, was a native of Takeda, a village populated by Senhadjians near the Sudan. He was a wise jurisconsult, with a keen intellect and a sharp mind, and he devoted himself to science. He had a sharp tongue. He is the author of annotations, the most remarkable of which is the one he made on these words of Khelil: "The intention of the one who swears must be specified." I have abridged this work by adding quotations taken from other authors and have made it into a volume to which I have given the title of: Tenbih el-oudgif 'ala tahrir khossiset niyatou 'l-halif. He also published a treatise on the obligation of the Friday prayer in common in the village of Ansammani, contrary to the opinion of other authors: he was right. He is also the author of the books: El-djaouab el-medjdoud 'an as'ilat elqadi Mohammed-ben-Mahmoud and Adjouibat el-faqir 'an as'ilat el-émir, the latter in response to Emir Askia-El-Hâdj-Mohammed, and other works. He received lessons from El-Moghili, El-Djelâl-Es-Soyouti and other teachers. He had a discussion with the hafid El-Belbâli on certain issues. He was still living around the year 950 (1543).

'Abu-Bekr-ben-Ahmed-Bîr-ben-'Omar-ben-Mohammed-Aqît, Timbuktu by birth, he fixed his residence in the noble city of Medina. He was my paternal uncle. He was a good man with a beautiful voice, reserved, ascetic, pious and God-fearing. He was a blessed saint known for his virtues, and of obvious piety, reserve, and kindness. He was a man of strong faith, practised almsgiving and good deeds, and rarely kept anything back despite his limited resources. He had an incomparable ardor for good and was so from his youth. He made the pilgrimage to Mecca and frequented the holy places, and then returned to his country because of his children whom he brought back with him. After making the pilgrimage again, he settled in Medina, where he remained until his death at the beginning of the year 991 (end of January or February 1583); he was born in 932 (1526-1527). He was my first teacher of syntax; thanks to the divine protection which he enjoyed I made great progress and in a short time, without any effort, I became a master of this branch of science. He had glorious moments. Always fearful of God and attentive to please Him, he gave wise advice to men. He sobbed incessantly (٤٢) and his tongue moistened to praise God and often mentioned His name. Very open with everyone, he was one of the best saints on earth. He spurned fortune and deprived himself of its glitter, though he belonged to a family enjoying high regard. I have never seen his like, nor even anyone approaching in his merits. He left some small treatises on Sufism and other subjects {1}.

Ahmed-ben-Ahmed-ben-'Omar-ben-Mohammed-Aqît-ben-'Omar-ben-'Ali-ben-Yahya, my father. - He was a jurisconsult, a theologian, the son of a jurisconsult and a theologian, a fine and sagacious mind. He was a scholar, a traditionalist, he had studied everything, the theory of law, rhetoric, logic. He had a sensitive heart and was highly esteemed and respected by the princes and the whole world. He enjoyed using his influence and was never rejected. He was firm with kings as well as [69] with others, so that all had the deepest respect for him. He was visited at home, and when, on one of his journeys, he fell ill at Kâgho, the great Sultan Askia-Daoud, in order to do him honour, came to see him every night to watch and talk with him until he was well. His power and glory were famous; no one dared to resist him, so great was his authority. He loved good people and was humble with them, never hating anyone and doing justice to all. He was a lover of books; his well-stocked library contained all the rare and precious works; he willingly lent them out.

He had taken lessons from his paternal uncle, the blessing of that time, Mahmud-ben-'Omar and from other masters. He travelled to the East in the year 956 (1549); he made the pilgrimage to Mecca and visited the tomb of the Prophet. On this journey, he came into contact with many scholars such as En-Nâsir-El-Laqqâni, Sherif Youcef, disciple of Es-Soyouti, El-Djemal, son of Sheikh Zakariya, El-Adjhouri, Et-Tadjouri. In Mecca and Medina he met Amîn-eddîn-El-Meïmouni, El-Mellaï, Ibn-Hadjar, Abdelaziz-El-Lamti, Abdelmoʻti-Es-Sekhaouï, Abdelqader-El-Fakihi, etc. He benefited from the conversation of these scholars, but he especially frequented 'Aboul-Makârim-Mohammed-El-Bekri and enjoyed his divine protection. He noted a number of proposals from this master and then returned to his country, where he gave a few courses.

He commented on the tekhmis {1} of the 'Achriniyrit el-fazaziya, a poem in honour of the Prophet; he also made an excellent commentary on the poem of El-Moghili on logic [70] and glosses on a passage of Khelil; then he composed marginal glosses on the commentary of Et-Tataï to show the inaccurate passages of this work; he commented on the Soghra {1} of Es-Senousi, the Qortobiya {2}, and the Djomel {3} of El-Khoundji on the osoul {4}, but he did not complete most of these works. For twenty and some years, during the month of redjeb and the following two months he explained the two Saħiħ. He died on Sunday evening, the 17th of the month of Sha'ban in the year 991 (6 September 1583).

As his speech had become embarrassed, one day when in the mosque he was reading the Sahiḥ of Moslem, our master the most learned Mohammed-Baghyo'o, who was sitting opposite him, beckoned him to interrupt his reading. On the following Monday he died. Among his many disciples are: the two virtuous jurisconsults, our master Mohammed and his brother Ahmed, both sons of the jurisconsult Mahmud-Baghyo'o; they studied under him osul, rhetoric and logic; the two jurisconsults and brothers Abdallah and 'Abderrahman, both sons of the jurisconsult Mahmud, and others. I myself attended his classes on many subjects and he gave me degrees on everything he taught according to his system or a borrowed system. I studied with him the two Sahih, the Muatļas {5} and the Shifa. He was born at the beginning of Moharrem of the year 929 (November-December 1522). After his death (God have mercy on him! ) I saw him in a beautiful dream {6}. [71]

Ahmed-ben-Mohammed-ben-Sa'id, son of the daughter of the jurisconsult Mahmud-ben-'Omar. - He was a jurisconsult, theologian, scholar and teacher, and once attended his grandfather's lessons on the Risâla and the Mokhtasar of Khelil. He studied under other masters the Mokhtasar and the Modaouquama. The population benefited from his talents from the year 960 (1553) until his death, which occurred in Moharrem, the first month of the year 976 (July 1568).

The jurisconsult, our master Mohammed, and his brother Ahmed, also a jurisconsult. --He studied the Mouatta, the Modaouana, the Mokhtasar of Khelil and other works under the direction of the former {1}. He is the author of a marginal gloss on Khelil in which he deals with both the form and the substance. He was born in 931 (1524-1525). I knew him as a young man and attended his course.

Mohammed-ben-Mahmoud-ben-'Abu-Bekr, the Ouankori, the Timbuktu. - He is better known as Baghyo'o (ba with the vowel a, ghain with the djezm, ya with the vowel o and 'ain with the vowel o). He was our master and protector. A jurisconsult, theologian, scholar, virtuous, pious, devout (٤٤), he was one of God's best virtuous creatures, a practicing scholar, a man imbued with goodness; he was of perfect loyalty, of pure nature. He was so inclined to goodness and to believe that everyone was like him that he had an excellent opinion of others and regarded them, as it were, as his equals in good feeling and having no knowledge of evil.

He took care of the affairs of others, harming himself when necessary in order to be of service to them. He was indulgent to their weaknesses, [72] sought to bring them into agreement, and urged them to love science, to follow its teachings, to spend every moment on it, to frequent scholars, and to be perfectly docile. He lavished on them all his books the most precious, the rarest and the most cherished; he never asked for them afterwards, whatever science they dealt with. In this way he lost a great number of his books (God be thankful to him!). Sometimes a student would come to his door and ask for a book, and he would give it away without even knowing who he was dealing with. It was truly amazing that he did this; he did it to please God, in spite of his passion for books, which he eagerly collected either by buying them or by having them copied.

One day I went to him to ask for some grammar books. He searched his library and gave me all those he could find. He had great patience for teaching; he devoted every moment of the day to it, and when it was a question of teaching something useful to a pupil, he was never discouraged or put off. Those present were obsessed with it, but he took no notice. And he was so patient that one day I heard one of our fellow students, astonished at his patience, say: "I believe that this jurisconsult drank the water of Zemzem {1} so that he would not be put off teaching." This did not prevent him from devoting himself to acts of piety.

He did not believe in the bad faith of people, and always thought well of others as long as they had not done anything wrong, and even if they had done something wrong. He was concerned only with his own affairs and refrained from taking part in gossip; he draped himself in the most magnificent mantle of discretion and reserve. He held firmly in his hand the solid standard of continence. He was calm and dignified, of an elite nature and a modesty that made it easy to deal with him, and he had won over all hearts. Everyone was unanimous in making the most of him. One could only see people in love with him, glorifying him and sincerely praising him.

He was so long-suffering that he never refused to teach a beginner or a narrow-minded person. He spent his whole life teaching while actively engaged in the affairs of the people and the affairs of the cadis. No one could have found a replacement for him or met his equal.

The Sultan offered him the government of his palace {1}; he refused to accept the offer made to him and rejected it after insisting on the prince (٤٥); he was thus delivered by God from this trouble.

He devoted himself to teaching especially after the death of Sidi Ahmed-ben-Mohammed-ben-Said. He was the first person to have a lecture on the subject, and when I knew him, he began his lectures immediately after the morning prayer and continued them until the great doha {2}, varying the subjects that he treated. Then he would go home and perform the doha prayer, and sometimes he would go to the cadi's house to attend to the affairs of the people or to reconcile them. After that he would continue to teach at home until noon; he would say the dohor prayer with all the faithful and would resume his lessons until the asr. After this last prayer, he would go to another place to teach again until dusk or until about that time. After the maghreb {3} he would teach [74] in the mosque until the acha {1} and then he would return home. I have even heard that he always came to the mosque at the end of the night.

A subtle, sagacious, fine, alert, meticulous mind, quick to reply, quick to understand, of a luminous intelligence, he was taciturn, silent, serious. Sometimes, however, he would lighten up, or else he would throw at his listeners something that testified to his well-known intellectual superiority and the promptness of his understanding. He had learned Arabic and law from two virtuous jurisconsults, his father and his maternal uncle.

At the same time as his brother, the virtuous jurisconsult Ahmed, he settled in Timbuktu. Both of them assiduously followed the lessons of the jurisconsults Ahmed-ben-Mohammed-ben-Sa'id on the Mokhtasar of Khelil; then they went on pilgrimage to Mecca with their maternal uncle. On this journey they met En-Nâsir-El-Laqqâni, Et-Tadjouri, Sherif Youcef-El-Aumayouni, El-Barahamouchi {2} the hanafite, Imam Mohammed-El-Bekri and other scholars and enjoyed their talks. They returned to their country on the death of their maternal uncle and, after completing the pilgrimage, they settled in Timbuktu, where they studied law and tradition under the guidance of Ibn-Sa'id. They explained with him the Mouatta, the Modaououana, the Mokhtasar, etc. He was the only one who had the right to know the law and the tradition, and he explained with him the Mouatta, the Modaououana, the Mokhtasar, etc. With my father, they studied the Osul, the rhetoric and the logic by explaining the Osul of Es-Sebki and the Telkhis el-miftah {3}. Then, after the death of his brother, Mohammed alone also studied with my father the Djomel of El-Khoundji. At the same time he was engaged in teaching [75] and later became the greatest master of his time without anyone being able to compare to him.

I followed his courses assiduously for more than ten years; I saw with him about eight times the whole Mokhtasar of Khelil with the interpretations he gave of it (٤٦) and those he held from others. I studied with him, so as to have a complete understanding of it, the Mouatta; the Teshil {1} of Ibn-Mâlek, which I examined thoroughly and in all its aspects for three years; the Osul of Es-Sebki with the commentary of El-Mahalli, seen thoroughly three times; I have also examined the Alfiya {2} of El-Iraqi with the commentary of the author; the Telkhis el-miftah with the abridgement of Es-Saad, twice, at least; the Soghra of Es-Senousi; the commentary of El-Djezaïriya {3}; the Hikem {4} of Ibn-'Ata-Allah, with commentary by Zerrouq; the Nadm {5} of Abu-Mogra'a and the Hachemiya on astrology with their commentaries; the Moqaddima {6} of Et-Tadjouri on this subject; the Redjez {7} of El-Moghili on logic; the Khazeredjia {8} on metrics, with the commentary of Es-Sibti sheriff; a large part of Ibn-'Acem's Tohfat el-hokkám {9} with the commentary of the author's son; all according to his interpretations. I also [76] studied with him the Fera'ï {1} of Ibn El-Hâdjeb, a complete and critical study. I attended his lectures on the Taudih {2}, but he only explained to me a part of it from the chapter of the deposit to the chapter of the judgments. I also studied with him a large part of El-Bâdji's El-Montega, the Modaouana with commentary by Abu-'l-Hasen-Ez-Zerouaili, the Shifa of Iyâd; half of the Sahih of El-Bokhari with his interpretation and the whole of the Sahih of Moslim on several occasions; the Modkhel of Ibn El-Hâdjeb {3}; finally I attended some of his lessons on the Risâla, the Alfiya, etc. I commented with him on the sublime Qur'an up to the middle of the Sura of A'raf {4}; I heard him read the entire Djam‘i el-mi'yárs {5} of El-Ouancherisi, a work which forms a large volume, and other matters. I often discussed with him doubtful points and had recourse to his knowledge on important questions. To tell the truth, he was my teacher, my master, and no one was as useful to me as he was, either by himself or by his books (God bless him and grant him paradise as a reward!). He gave me diplomas in his own handwriting on the subjects he taught, either by his own method or that of others. I gave him a number of my works; he put in his hand annotations flattering to me; he even reproduced the results of some of my researches and I heard him quoting some of them in his lessons, which proves his impartiality, his modesty and his respect for the truth in all circumstances. He was with [77] us on the day of our misfortune {1}. That was the last time I saw him. Later I learned that he had died on a Friday of Shaououal in the year 1002 (June-July 1593); he was born, he had told me, in 930 (1524). He is the author of notes and marginal glosses in which he drew attention to (٤٧) the errors committed by the commentators of Khelil and others; he had noted one by one all the errors contained in the great commentary of Et-Tataï, and coming either from the author's own writing or from his quotations. This extremely useful work I have condensed in one of my opuscules (God have mercy on this master!). This is the end of the excerpt I gave from the Edz-Dzil {2}.

One of the lords of the people of Sankore, - the fact was transmitted from a reliable source, - had given an alms of 1000 gold mitsqals into the hands of the sheikh, the jurisconsult, the virtuous 'Abou-Abdallah. that is to say, the cadi Moaddib-Mohammed-El-Kâbari; this latter distributed it to the poor at the gate of the mosque of Sankore. This is what happened: The famine had broken out at that time. The sheikh, speaking one day in his medrasa, said, "Whoever gives alms of a thousand mitsqals, I will provide him with paradise." It was then that the generous personage in question gave this sum which was distributed among the poor. It is said that later the sheikh saw in a dream someone who said to him, "In the future, do not make any commitments in our name.

As the saint, the ascetic, the jurisconsult 'Abderrahman, son of the jurisconsult Mahmud, was relating the foregoing adventure during his lecture which was held in the mosque, it is related that a man said to him, "O my lord, do you think [78] that at this hour if you promised paradise to anyone he would give you a thousand mitsqals of gold?" 'Abderrahman replied, "El-Kâbari and his kind were the men who were capable of following such a path."

The sheikh mentioned above, that is to say the jurisconsult, the cadi Moaddib-Mohammed-El-Kâbari, the master of masters (God have mercy on him, show him his satisfaction and make us benefit from his blessings in this world and in the next! ) settled in Timbuktu in the ninth century. He was the contemporary of a great number of sheikhs, including the following: The jurisconsult Sidi 'Abderrahman-Et-Temîmi, grandfather of the cadi Habîb; the jurisconsult Anda-Ag-Mohammed the great, grandfather by his mother of the jurisconsult the cadi Mahmoud; the jurisconsult 'Omar-ben-Mohammed-Aqît, father of the aforementioned jurisconsult Mahmoud; the very learned, the pole, Sidi Yahya-Et-Tâdelsi, etc. He reached the highest degree of science and virtue. He had as disciples the jurisconsult 'Omar-Anda-Ag-Mohammed-Aqît and Sidi Yahya. It is said that he did not let a single month pass without having the Tehdib {1} of El-Berada‘i read in full, so many readers did he have. At that time the city was full of Sudanese students, people of the west (٤٨), full of ardour for science and for virtue. It was to such an extent that it is assured that there are, buried in the same enclosure as him, thirty figures of Kabara, all learned and holy. His resting place is between that of the holy jurisconsult El-Hadj-Ahmed-ben-'Omar-ben-Mohammed-Aqît and the place where the prayer for rain is made. Such is the information given to us by our master, the ascetic, the jurisconsult, El-Amin-ben-Ahmed, brother of the jurisconsult 'Abderrahman (may the earth be light to them!). [79]

This blessed sheikh was the author of many remarkable miracles. Here is one of them: A thaleb from Merrakesh used to give free rein to his tongue against the sheikh and say unseemly things about him, calling him, for example, El-Kafiri {1}. He had a high regard and enjoyed great credit with the Cherifian princes to whom he read El-Bokhari during Ramadan. God punished him with elephantiasis. Doctors from all over the world were summoned: one of them went so far as to say that the thaleb would only heal as long as it ate the heart of a child. The prince of the time had the throat of who knows how many children slaughtered; but it was of no avail, and the sick man died in sad conditions (God forbid such a fate!). This fact was reported by the very learned jurisconsult Ahmed-Baba (God have mercy on him!).

Another miracle is this one which I heard told by my father who had heard it from his masters: One day in the first ten of dzou-'l-hiddja {2}, the sheikh went out to buy some live animals for the festival of sacrifices. These animals were on the other side of the river. The sheikh, who had one of his disciples with him, began to walk on the river. The disciple, driven by some circumstance of which God had the secret, followed the example given to him and disappeared in the middle of the river at the moment when his master reached the other bank. The latter then called his disciple, held out his hand and pulled him out of the water; then he said to him: "What has led you to do this? - As I saw you do it, I wanted to do it myself," replied the other. - How could you compare your foot with that of a man who has never walked in the way of divine disobedience!" cried the sheikh.

On the day when this sheikh died (God have mercy on him!), the sheikh, the imam, the saint, the enlightened one, the model, the seer, the pole, the help, the scholar, the well-directed one, the noble lord, the divine Sidi Yahya-Et-Tâdelsi made his elegy in the following verses (٤٩):

Remember! the memory is full of useful teachings; in its folds there is enough to quench the thirst of the elite of those who come to drink; Have you not seen that if the trace of those who put ardour into being generous is worth quoting, the trace left by the thinkers is even more worthy of being esteemed. The fragrance of the east wind restores to man the vigour of the spirit; he then goes to join his companions and help them with his arm {1}; The disappearance of a worldly intelligence is a mourning which is manifested in all countries and in all men of value. The masters of science have been affected by the death of the sheikh, and there is in this event the threat of future misfortunes; O students of the science of law, you know what was among men the one who permeates your hearts with sadness. The sadness that fills your hearts comes from the loss of this master, this benevolent jurisconsult, bearer of the jewels of science, With perfect teaching, whose intelligence brought everything together and who discovered in the Tehdib the most fortunate indications; This master was Mohammed-Moaddib, the prudent man, whose perseverance and patience raised his rank unceasingly. Is it possible that after him we will find someone who explains everything? O Arabs, will we find after him someone to make us walk (whip us)? If we did not have the Prophet, his companions, the great masters of religion and the spiritual guides to console us, tears should flow from our eyes like an uninterrupted rain as we see these bodies disappear and these torches extinguished. The world was darkened and its sorrows made manifest in that morning when the news of his death spread among the teachers. [81] What intelligent man would refuse to come and carry him to the ground with the crowd? The elders, too, were saddened by the hardships, When the two stretchers broke under a righteous man who had led us to Madinah more than once {1}, By doing so we will be honoring and doing a good deed to the righteous man who was faithful to the pact of the maitress {2}. O my brothers, pray for him and may God grant him the rest and quiet of a glorious grave. May he enjoy a large abode in paradise as a testimony to his mastery and as a reward for his submission to the faith! May he receive from the Clement, to whom belong the glory and the sublimity, a greeting full of benevolence and of happy profit; May the Lord, the God of the Throne, shower his blessings on the best of his envoys, his most eminent representative, Mohammed, who has been chosen to complete the work of mercy and the work of his noble predecessors; May it be so also for his family, his companions, and their successors, all those for whose sake the prayer of the faithful is raised! (٥٠).

Such is this piece of verse which I copied from a text written in my father's hand (God, by his grace, have mercy on him and forgive him! ).

Genealogy of Sheikh Sidi Yahya (God have mercy on him, make us benefit from his blessings and send them back to us in this world and in the next! ) His name was Yahya - ben-Abderrahim-ben-'Abderrahman-Ets-Tsa'alebi-ben-Yahia-El-Bekkaï-ben-'Abou'l-Hasan-'Ali-ben-Abdallah-ben-Abdeldjebbâr-ben-Temim-ben-Hormoz-ben-Hâtem-ben-Qosaï-ben-Youcef-ben-Youch'a-ben-Ouard-ben-Battâl-ben-Ahmed-ben-Mohammed-ben-Aïssa-ben-Mohammed-ben-El-Hasan-ben-'Ali-ben-'Abou-Tâleb (God whiten the face of the latter and show his satisfaction and mercy to all! ). He came to Timbuktu at the beginning of the government of the Tuareg; he was well received by the Timbuktu-Koi, [82] Mohammed-Naddi, who took him in affection, treated him with the greatest distinction, and had a mosque built for him, and entrusted him with the duties of imam.

Yahya attained the highest degree of knowledge, virtue and sanctity; his fame spread throughout all countries and the universe. His blessings were felt by all, great and small. He performed many miracles and often had double vision. The jurisconsult, the cadi, the father of blessings, Mahmoud said: Of all those who set foot in Timbuktu, no one was as eminent as Sidi Yahya. The saint, the ascetic, the jurisconsult, the preacher 'Abou-Zeïd-'Abderrahman, son of the jurisconsult Mahmoud, who has just been named, said in his turn: "It is the duty of the people of Timbuktu to visit every day the mausoleum of Sidi Yahya in order to obtain its blessings, and they should do so even if they lived three days' walk away from this city {1}."

At the very beginning (God have mercy on him!) Sidi Yahya abstained from trading; but at the end of his career, he actively engaged in it. He used to say that until he started trading he saw the Prophet every night in a dream; then he saw him only once a week, then once a month and finally once a year. And when he was asked about the cause of this, he said, 'I suppose it is only because of my business. - Why don't you give it up? - I do not," he said, "want to be a burden to anyone." See (God have mercy on you and us!) how fatal trading is, although this blessed sheikh took the greatest care and put the greatest scruple into guarding himself from all [83] that which is illicit. See also how hard is the necessity of being dependent on others, since because of this (٥١) this blessed master renounced a high divine favor. We ask God to give us the grace to be forgiving and forgive us in this world and in the next!

It is said that one day, surrounded by a group of students, and sitting outside the mosque at the foot of the minaret, he was giving his lecture, when the clouds rising in the sky threatened rain so soon, that the students were preparing to get up. The thunder having rumbled then, the sheikh said, "Do not hurry, stand still, for the rain will not fall here, the angel commands it to go and fall in such and such a country." And indeed the clouds passed and disappeared.

Our master, the ascetic, the jurisconsult, El-Amin-ben-Ahmed (God have mercy on him!) told us that one day the sheikh's maids had cooked a fresh fish and had left it from morning until evening without the fire producing the slightest effect. As he heard them wonder at this, he said to them, "My foot touched something wet as I passed through the vestibule on my way to prayer this morning, perhaps it was the fish that it brushed against: yet fire cannot burn anything that my body has touched."

It is also said that when the students of Sankore came to him to receive his lessons, he would say to them: "O people of Sankore, you should be satisfied with Sidi 'Abderrahman-Et-Temîmi." This character had come from the Hedjaz in the company of Sultan Mousa, king of Melli, when the latter returned from his pilgrimage to Mecca. He settled in Timbuktu and found that city full of Sudanese jurisconsults. As soon as he realized that they knew more about law than he did, he left for Fez, devoted himself to the study of law, and then returned to Timbuktu to settle [84] again. He was the grandfather of the cadi Habib (God have mercy on them all!).

In the year 868 (1463-1464) Sidi Yahya died and shortly after him his friend Sheikh Mohammed-Naddi died, as mentioned before (God have mercy on them both!).

Sheikh Masira-Bobo-Ez-Zoghrâni, friend of the jurisconsult Mahmud-ben-'Omar. - He was an eminent theologian, a good, virtuous and pious man. One would hardly have found his equal in his tribe, for it is hardly renowned for its virtue, nor for the purity of its Islamism. In his early days, the preacher, the ascetic, the jurisconsult 'Abderrahman, son of the jurisconsult Mahmud, was assiduous with him (٥٢); he allowed himself to be led by him and collected a number of his sermons. It is said that one day while he was in his medrasa he was told of a funeral. Who is it?" he asked - "A Zoghrâni," he was told. - So," he continued, "I want to go and pray over him in consideration of Sheikh Masira-Bobo. He went to the funeral and prayed over the deceased.

The sheikh, the scholar in God, the saint, the man of double sight, the author of miracles, the jurisconsult 'Abou-Abdallah-Mohammed -ben-Mohammed-ben-'Ali-ben-Mousa, 'Oriân-er-râs (Bare Head). He was one of the virtuous servants of God, a generous ascetic who spent all his wealth in alms for the sake of God. When he received offerings or gifts, he kept none for himself and gave them to the poor and needy. He bought many slaves and then gave them their freedom for the love of God and for the future life. He had no doorkeeper; everyone entered his house without asking permission. People came to visit him from all countries and at all hours, especially on Fridays after the asr prayer. [85]

The people who visited him most often were the people of the Makhzen {1}, pashas, lesser personages, and travellers passing through; they made these visits to him because of his many blessings, Sometimes he was expansive, sometimes, on the contrary, he was concentrated. At times he was expansive, at other times he was concentrated. In his moments of expansion he would tell those around him strange or wonderful stories; he would laugh at the very first of these stories. Sometimes, when he was laughing, he would strike the hand of his interlocutor with his blessed hand and put his left hand over his mouth. He often hit me on the hand in this way. When, on the contrary, he was concentrated, he did not say anything and contented himself with answering the one who spoke to him. In these moments, what I heard him say most often were these phrases: "What God wants will be; what He does not want will not be. Or again: "God is my support and he is enough for me", that God hears whoever implores him", "there is nothing beyond God". If someone, having experienced some misfortune, asked him to recite the Fatiha {2}, he would extend his two blessed hands and after saying the formula of exorcism {3} and the bismillah {4} he would say: Ya sin, etc. {5}; O most merciful of the merciful, O most merciful of the merciful, O most merciful of the merciful. Then he would recite the Fatiha three times and make the following invocation three times: May God improve us as well as you, may He restore our affairs and yours (٥٣), may He ensure a calm and happy end for you and us.

It was only towards the end of his life, when the time [86] of the supreme journey drew near, that he had a porter and no longer allowed people to enter his house as in the early days. At times he even refused to receive guests. From that time on he only recited the Fatiha once, and then he stopped reciting it. One day when I was sitting in front of him, he said to me: "To all those who will come here, tell them that I cannot recite this Fatiha anymore. He then performed his customary prayer for me only once and it was the last one (God have mercy on him, show him his satisfaction and place him in the highest degree of the last abode! ).

At the beginning of his career, he met the father of generous works, the saint, the pole, the scholar, Sidi Mohammed-El-Bekri, a very young man at that time. As he had just left his friend in God, the jurisconsult Ahmed-ben-El-Hâdj -Ahmed-ben-'Omar-ben-Mohammed-Aqît, following one of the customary visits they made to each other, he found the young man sitting at noon near the door of the mosque of Sankoré, whose door was not yet open; El-Bekri was holding in his hand the book of the Risâla of Abu-Zeid-El-Qairouâni, which he was studying under the guidance of his master the jurisconsult 'Abderrahman, son of the jurisconsult Mahmud. On seeing him, the blessed sheikh stopped and asked him what book he was holding in his hand: "This is the Risâla," replied El-Bekri. The sheikh held out his blessed hand and said, "Show it to me.” Then taking it in his hands, he examined it for a moment and handed it back saying, "God bless you over this book {1}." Then he went on his way, not knowing with whom he was dealing, for he had never seen him. When his master returned to the mosque, he told him about this adventure and the master suspected that it was El-Bekri. He went to the house of his brother, the jurisconsult Ahmed, and said to him: "Did Sidi Mohammed-El-Bekri come to see you today? - Yes," replied Ahmed; "he even stayed later than usual." Then the master told him what had happened between El-Bekri and Mohammed-Ad {1}-'Ali-Mousa, as the people of Sankore called him.

Later the sheikh's mind was so disturbed that it was thought he had gone mad. He only slept in mosques (or the mosque). Mohammed-El-Bekri heard that the sheikh had announced that he had seen Him whom one cannot see {2}: and that consequently his end would be happy. Now, one of his trustworthy students told me that he had asked the sheikh if anyone in this world had seen God. Yes," he replied, "there is a person in this city who has seen God the Most High at the same time as you. As (08) I was talking about this fact to my master, the very learned, the jurisconsult Mohammed-Baba, the son of the jurisconsult El-Amin, without telling him who had said these words, my master said to me: "The one who said this is the one who has seen the Lord (may he be blessed and exalted!)."

On a certain Friday, after the asr prayer, there were three of us with the sheikh, me and two others. The sheikh was in one of his moments of expansion and he was chatting with us. Suddenly the clouds rose in the sky. The sheikh's face immediately changed and he became sullen, interrupted his conversation and remained extremely agitated in his classroom. No sooner had the first [88] drops of rain fallen than he became harsh and violent in his speech. "I don't want to receive anyone," he said, "when the rain is falling. We all went out at once. I told the adventure to my master, the jurisconsult El-Amin, and he was very surprised.

One of my confreres told me the following story: "I had a neighbour with whom we used to meet in the mornings and evenings. One day he missed his appointment and, as his house was next to mine, I went to his house to ask about him. When I reached the door of his house, the porter went to warn him, and then returned and said to me, "My master sends word that he cannot see you at this moment." When I heard this, I almost burst out in anger, and beating my breast with my hand, I cried out, "Such a man as I am goes to visit such a one in his own home, and he sends him away without even seeing him! I decided from then on never to speak to him again.

Shortly after that, I visited the blessed sheikh. Sidi Mohammed-'Oriân-er-râs. No sooner had I entered his presence than, after greeting me, he spoke to me in these terms: "One of the saints of God had lost one of the positions he occupied. He was so distressed that he wished to meet El-Khidr {1} (peace be upon him!) so that he could intercede with God to get him to return the position he had lost. And God, in His kindness and grace, restored it to him without the intercession of anyone. Shortly afterwards El-Khidr came to the saint and greeted him at the door of his house: "Who are you," said the saint. - The person you asked for," said El-Khidr. - God has made it possible for me to do without you," said the saint. El-Khidr went away, without beating his chest with his hand and without saying, 'O such a one, one does not [89] send away such a man as I.' The man was excusable, for he was undoubtedly in a position where he could not be seen by anyone." I then understood what he meant; I repented of what I had done; I asked God's forgiveness for it and went to meet my neighbour and fellow-member. I introduced myself and he immediately had me open his door. I entered and he said to me, "Excuse me for not allowing myself to be seen on the day you came, but I was lying (٥٥) at that time on the floor and had colic. I could not admit that anyone saw me in that state. - God forgive you and me," I replied.

One of his neighbours related the following fact: I had gone one day to the cadi Mahmud-ben-Ahmed-ben-'Abderrahman: 'You have a saint for a neighbour,' he said to me. - Yes," I replied. - The saint who does not come to the Friday service," he added. I kept silent, then after that I went to see my neighbour Sidi Mohammed-'Oriân-er-râs. O such a one," he said to me, "should one forgive or not? - Forgiveness is better," I replied. - Indeed," he replied, "if I did not forgive, things would happen that would not be appropriate. Well, tell him who claims that I do not go to Friday prayers that long before he came to the service he was preceded by the one he claims never to have attended. Anecdotes of this kind on his account are extremely numerous (God have mercy on him, show him satisfaction, and let us enjoy his influence! Amen!).

The jurisconsult, the theologian, the ascetic, the virtuous, the pious, the reserved, our master El-Amin-ben-Ahmed, uterine brother of the jurisconsult 'Abderrahman-ben-Ahmed, the head of the school. His tongue unceasingly moistened to proclaim the praises of God, so Sidi Mohammed-'Oriâner-râs called him no other than El-Amin the litanist. [90]

One of my confreres of the people of Sankore told me that his father, a very old man, had said to him, "I knew Sankore in the old days when the virtuous people were very numerous there, well, I have not seen any of them practicing Islam with as much fervor as the jurisconsult El-Amin."

He told us, himself (may God have mercy on him! ) in his medrasa, that the jurisconsult 'Omar-ben-Mohammed-ben-'Omar, brother of the jurisconsult Ahmed-Moghya, studied the Chifa of the cadi Iyâd under the direction of the very learned, the erudite the jurisconsult Ahmed-ben-El-Hâdj-Ahmed-ben-'Omar-ben-Mohammed-Aqît and that he and his son the jurisconsult Ahmed-Baba attended his lessons, as well as the jurisconsult, the cadi Ahmed (٥٦). The master did not allow anyone to ask him a question; he made an exception only for the student being questioned and, at certain times, for Sidi Ahmed. As for his son Ahmed-Baba, every time he asked a question, his father told him: "Shut up! One day, however, when the master had asked the student 'Omar if the verb qabouha is transitive or intransitive, the latter could not answer, so he addressed Sidi Ahmed who also kept silent." However," he said, "I have read to you this verse: and they will be disgraced {1} (s. XXVIII, v. 42)," As he said this, he turned his eyes towards me and began to smile.

We were a number of fellow students who one day showed our sheikh, the jurisconsult El-Amin, the book entitled: Delail el-kheïrát {2}, the copies of which have variants, and we asked him to indicate to us whether the word seyyidna should be retained or rejected. He replied: "We addressed the same question to our sheikh, the very learned jurisconsult Mahmud-Baghyo'o, and he answered that there was no inconvenience in these discrepancies and that they did not cause any harm.

And we asked him about the words of the author: 'and that you forgive such and such a son of such and such a one'. We addressed, he replied, the same question to the jurisconsult 'Abderrahman, son of the jurisconsult Mahmud, and this is the answer he gave us, "and that you forgive 'Abderrahman, but without adding the name of the father."

As for the date of El-Amîn's death, it will be given later, God willing, in reference to the year 1041 (1637). That of the death of Sidi Mohammed--Orian-er-râs will come, God willing, on the occasion of the year 1027 (1618).

**Notes:**

<note n="1">This précis of Muslim law is in a way the code of the Malekites.< /note>

<note n="2"> According to a passage in the <foreign> zalj Judd iso agged to list as Lâs</foreign> (ms. Arabic no. 4628 of the National Library, 1° 283 10), Ahmed Baba says in effect that he composed a supplement

<foreign> (ذل) < /foreign> it and the title he gives it is:

<foreign>. نيل الابتهاج تطريز :

</foreign> l. It is quite possible that the abbreviated name of this work <foreign> Jaill</foreign> was confused with <foreign> Jil</foreign>, a very easy confusion in Arabic writing. A. Cherbonneau has published an Essay on Arabic literature in the Sudan, after the Tekmil.t-ed- (liba'lj of Ahmed-Baba, the Tombouclian. Constantine et Paris, MDCCCLVI; some of the biographies that follow will be found in this plate.< /note>

<note n="3">We write lanlat

<foreign> ,حدالة

</foreign> so much

<foreign>. كدالة

</foreign></note>

61

<note n="1"> Treatise on Malekite law by Sahnoun, cadi of Qairan.< /note>

62

<note n="1"> This biography can be found on page 8 of the Essay on Arabic Literature ciu Soudun.< /note>

<note n="2"> See Essay, p. 9.< /note>

<note n="3">The name Tekrour is that of a province of the Sudan; but it is often used to denote the whole Sudan.< /note>

63

<note n="1">The language of Muslim law is often obscure to the layman.< /note>

<note n="2">The Risâla of Abu-Zeid-El-Qairouâni is a widely used work of Malikite law,< /note>

<note n="3"> Ibn-Malek's Arabic Grammar in verse.< /note>

64

<note n="1">Word for word: "knowing by heart of travel relations."</note>

<note n="2">Cr. the Essay, p. i.</note>

65

<note n="1">Famous scholar from Tlemcen. His biography is given in the Essay, p. 10.

</note>

<note n="2">Cf. the Essay, p. 18.< /note>

66

<Or Bechkouri.< /note>

67

<note n="1"> This is Ahmed-Baba, whose text is reproduced, speaking.< /note>

<note n="2">Cf. the Essay, p. 20.< /note>

68

<note n="1">Cf. the Essay, p. 24.< /note>

69

<note n="1"> This kind of development of a piece of poetry consists of adding four lines to each line of a poem so as to form stanzas of five lines.< /note>

70

<note n="1"> Short title of a work on the dogmas of the faith composed by Mohammcd-ben-Youcef-Es-Senousi; the full title is:<foreign> siell ödeel.< /foreign></note>

<note n="2"> Poem that deals with the duties of the Muslim.< /note>

<note n="3"> Treatise on Logic by Ibn-Nâmâwar-El-Khoundji.< /note>

<note n="4"> It is the name given to the science concerned with the theory of law or the principles from which it is derived.< /note>

<note n="5"> Title of a collection of traditions published after Malik-ben-Anas, the founder of the Malekite doctrine.< /note>

<note n="6">Cf. the Essay, p. 21.< /note>

71

<note n="1"> This notice is very poorly written. After speaking of the two brothers at the beginning, only one is mentioned, and the name of the character under whom the author studied is indicated only by a pronoun that seems to refer to the scholar Ahmed, whose biography alone is given.< /note>

72

<note n="1">The waters of the well of Zemzem, a well located within the precincts of the temple of Mecca, are said to have the power to cure many ills and to give many virtues.< /note>

73

<note n="1">The mss. A and B give also which means "army". It would not be impossible, moreover, that the prince had thought of entrusting him with the command of his troops; we know that the cadi Asad led an expedition to Sicily. The ms. C writes Jso and the meaning would then be "palace"; this latter reading is more probable than the former.< /note>

<note n="2">The doha takes place at about half past nine of the evil hour,< /note>

<note n="3">The sunset prayer.< /note>

74

<note n="1">The prayer that takes place at dusk.< /note>

<note n="2"> Or: "El-Barahamnouch," according to the ms. C.</note>

<note n="3">The <foreign> chiell vent</foreign> is a rhetorical treatise by Jelâl-ed-Dîn-Mohammed-Ei-Qazouîni.< /note>

75

<note n="1">The full title is:<foreign> dolell Jalig weill changes.< /foreign> It is a prose grammar treatise composed by the author of the Alfiya, Djemâl-el-Dîn-Mohammedibn-Malek.</note>

<note n="2"> Treatise in verse on traditions, by Abd-er-Rahim-ben-El-Hosaïn-El-Atsiri El-Iraqi.< /note>

<note n="3"> Poem on the Unity of God by <foreign>s salti alii dus is dole</foreign></note>

<note n="4"> A tract of morality and mysticism by 'Ata-Allah-Tâdj-ed-Dîn-Ahmed El-Iskenderâni-Ech-Chadzili. The title is:<foreign> albell mbl.< /foreign></note>

<note n="5"> Probably the poem of <foreign> this gul</foreign> on the calculation of nativities.

</note>

<note n="6"> Perhaps the work entitled: <foreign>cell als j dades</foreign> by Mohammed-ben-Idris. It is a treatise for determining the time of prayers.< /note>

<note n="7"> This is probably the poem given as number 11 in the list given by Cherbonneau (see Essay, p. 13).< /note>

<note n="8"> Didactic poem on prosody by Diya-ed-Dîn-Abdallah-ben-Mohammed-El-Khazradji.< /note>

<note n="9"> Treatise on Malekite law in verse (cf. 0. Houdas and F. Martel, La Tohfat d'Ebn-Acem, text and translation, Algiers, 1882).< /note>

76

<note n="1">No doubt the <foreign>c ell paiso</foreign> of Ibn-El-Hadjeb.< /note>

<note n="2"> This is Sidi Khelil's <foreign> my</foreign>.< /note>

<note n="3">The ms. C has El-Hadjeb, instead of El-Hâdj which is also found in Cherbonneau,< /note>

<note n="4"> This is the title of the vile surah in the Qur'an.< /note>

<note n="5"> Jurisprudence work by Ahmed-ben-Yahya-ben-Mohammed ben-Abdelouâhid-ben-'Ali-El-Ouancherisi.< /note>

77

<note n="1">The day Timbuktu was taken by Moroccan troops under the leadership of Djouder.< /note>

<note n="2">Cf. the Essay, p. 25.< /note>

78

<note n="1">This is the <foreign> âblistly as gull Johans wisi</foreign> of 'Abu-Sa'id-Khelef-ben-'Abu-'l-Qâsem-El-Berâdi'i, a treatise on Malekite law.< /note>

79

<note n="1">Play on the ethnicity of the character who was El-Kâbari and whom the lhaleb transformed into Kafiri, i.e. "belonging to the infidels". Only by pronouncing the words in the manner of the vulgar language is the pun truly possible.< /note>

<note n="2"> It is on the 10th of this last month of the Muslim year that the great feast, known as the sacrifices, takes place, because on this day the pilgrims must slit a victim's throat. On this day all the faithful, wherever they may be, also impolish an animal.< /note>

80

<note n="1">The text of these verses being often altered by copyists, the translation is sometimes doubtful.< /note>

81

<The translation is uncertain.

<note n="2">That last word is far from certain.< /note>

82

<note n="1">The distance of three days' walk is considered, among Muslims, to be a sufficient distance to dispense with certain obligations of a religious or legal nature.< /note>

85

<note n="1">The word "Makhzen" is used in Morocco and Sudan to refer to the government or court of the ruler.< /note>

<note n="2">The first chapter of the Quran.< /note>

<note n="3">The last sura of the Quran.< /note>

<note n="4"> The formula of saying, "In the name of God the merciful, the merciful," which one should say whenever one undertakes something.</note>

<note n="5"> This is the title and the beginning of the thirty-sixth sura of the Qur'an.< /note>

86

<note n="1"> That is, "May you benefit from this work."</note>

87

<note n="1"> Presumably equivalent to or short for Aida "they."< /note>

<note n="2">The preceding part of the sentence was missing in mss. A and B. Nor does it appear in the printed text; ms, C was not yet in my possession when the printing of this part of the text took place. The one who cannot be seen is God. According to the Muslims, no man can see God without dying immediately afterwards; there was an exception only for Moses.</p> <p>

88

<note n="1">El-Khidr is the character referred to in the Qur'an, Sura xviii verses 62ff.< /note>

90

<note n="1">The word translated as "hated" is the past participle of the verb he was questioning. There is an untranslatable pun.< /note>

<note n="2"> Title of a book of prayers and litanies in honor of the Prophet. Its author is Mohammed-ben-Soliman-El-Djezouli.</note>