

# West Africa Seen from Moroccan Manuscript Archives

Mauro Nobili\* 

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, Illinois, USA

\*Corresponding author. E-mail: [nobili@illinois.edu](mailto:nobili@illinois.edu)

**Abstract:** The Area Studies paradigm that emerged in the United States in the late 1950s surely fostered research on parts of the world that had traditionally been neglected in academia, such as the African continent. However, this paradigm also had its shortcomings. Among these shortcomings, there is the tendency to disconnect North Africa from the rest of the continent. Recent works on trans-Saharan connections are a testimony of the potential of studying African history across the Sahara and from a continental perspective. This article demonstrates this potential by presenting a large corpus of Arabic manuscripts concerning West African history held in two of the most important libraries of Morocco: The Bibliothèque Royale Hasaniyya / al-Khizāna al-Ḥasaniyya and the Bibliothèque Nationale du Royaume du Maroc / al-Maktaba al-Waṭāniyya li-l-Mamlakat al-Maghribiyya.

**Résumé:** Le paradigme des études régionales qui a émergé aux États-Unis à la fin années 1950 a certainement favorisé la recherche sur des parties du monde traditionnellement négligées dans le milieu universitaire, comme le continent africain. Cependant, ce paradigme aussi avait ses défauts. Parmi ces lacunes, il y a eu la tendance à déconnecter l'Afrique du Nord du reste du continent. Les travaux récents sur les liaisons transsahariennes sont un témoignage du potentiel de l'étude de l'histoire africaine à travers le Sahara et dans une perspective continentale. Cet article démontre ce potentiel en présentant un important corpus de manuscrits arabes concernant l'histoire de l'Afrique de l'Ouest conservé dans deux des bibliothèques les plus importantes du Maroc : La Bibliothèque royale Hasaniyya / al-Khiz\_ana al-Ḥasaniyya et la Bibliothèque nationale du royaume du Maroc / al-Maktaba al-Wataniyya li-l-Mamlakat al-Maghribiyya.

The Area Studies paradigm that emerged in the United States in the late 1950s surely fostered research on parts of the world that had traditionally

---

*History in Africa*, Volume 49 (2022), pp. 301–330

© The Author(s), 2022. Published by Cambridge University Press on behalf of the African Studies Association. This is an Open Access article, distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution licence (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>), which permits unrestricted re-use, distribution and reproduction, provided the original article is properly cited.

doi:[10.1017/hia.2022.9](https://doi.org/10.1017/hia.2022.9)

been neglected in academia. Among these was the Africa continent, the quintessential “otherness” in Western imagination, as Valentin Y. Mudimbe demonstrates in his seminal *The Invention of Africa*.<sup>1</sup> Scholars such as Paul Zeleza and, more recently, Jean M. Allman have pointed out how the narrative that portrays the emergence of the Area Studies programs as the starting point of academic scholarship on Africa in fact silences a longer history of African American investment in knowledge production on the continent, which was based in historically black colleges and universities in North America.<sup>2</sup> Less strong has been the critique of another feature of this powerful narrative, which was informed by racialized discourses on Africa in the American academy and society; citing Zeleza, “Africa was black, tropical, trapped, as Hegel decreed, on the bosoms of the ‘underdeveloped, unhistorical spirit.’”<sup>3</sup> A consequence of this approach, John O. Voll remarks, has been the severing of North Africa from the rest of the continent.<sup>4</sup> Hence, in the words of Mervat Hatem, “the study of the continent was bifurcated between two fields, African and Middle East studies. African studies focused on sub-Saharan Africa; North Africa was the purview of Middle East.”<sup>5</sup>

In the past two decades, the Area Studies paradigm has been put under scrutiny.<sup>6</sup> In particular, studies on the Indian Ocean networks and on the historical interactions within the Islamic World demonstrated the frailty of these artificial boundaries.<sup>7</sup> In addition, studies centered on the Sahara, as a space in itself and an interface that connects North Africa and Africa south of

<sup>1</sup> Valentin Y. Mudimbe, *The Invention of Africa*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Zeleza, “The Pasts and Futures of African Studies and Area Studies,” *Ufahamu: Journal of the African Activist Association* 25–2 (1997), 5–41; and Jean M. Allman, “#HerskovitsMustFall? A Meditation on Whiteness, African Studies, and the Unfinished Business of 1968,” *African Studies Review* 62–3 (2019), 6–39. For different academic traditions of African studies, namely in France and the UK, see respectively Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch, “The Rise of Francophone African Social Science: From Colonial Knowledge to Knowledge of Africa,” in Martin, William G., West, Michael O., and Wallerstein, Immanuel M. (eds.), *Out of One, Many Africas: Reconstructing the Study and Meaning of Africa* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 39–53; and Christopher Fyfe, “The Emergence and Evolution of African Studies in the United Kingdom,” in *Out of One, Many Africas*, 54–61.

<sup>3</sup> Zeleza, “The Pasts and Futures of African Studies,” 11.

<sup>4</sup> John O. Voll, “Reconceptualizing the ‘Regions’ in ‘Area Studies,’” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 41–2 (2009), 197.

<sup>5</sup> Mervat Hatem, “Pensée 1: Why and How Should Middle East and African Studies Be Connected?” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 41–2 (2009), 189.

<sup>6</sup> See, for instance, the early critique to the area studies paradigm in Martha W. Lewis and Kären Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).

<sup>7</sup> Nile Green, “Rethinking the ‘Middle East’ after the Oceanic Turn,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 34–3 (2014), 556–564; and Scott S. Reese, “Islam in Africa / Africans in Islam,” *Journal of African History* 55 (2014), 17–26.

the Sahara, and not as a boundary, have started to blossom in recent years, as demonstrated by interdisciplinary volumes *Saharan Frontiers* and *Caravans of Gold, Fragments in Time*.<sup>8</sup> Yet, some of the detrimental effects of “decapitation” of the continent are still affecting the study of African history. I refer here to the absence in the toolkit of the “Africanist” of training in the Arabic language, which remains indispensable for the specialist of the Middle East and North Africa; and, vice versa, in the dearth of interest in the histories of African societies south of the Sahara by scholars at home with Arabic, who tend to focus on regions north and east of the great desert.<sup>9</sup>

Recent works such as Ghislaine Lydon’s *On Trans-Saharan Trails* or Chouki El Hamel’s *Black Morocco* are a testimony of the potential of studying African history across the Sahara and are contemporary counterparts of the pioneering work *The Golden Trade of the Moors* by Edward W. Bovill.<sup>10</sup> Historically, in particular, Morocco and West Africa have been inextricably connected, as testified, for example, by two edited collections published by the vibrant Institut des Etudes Africaines of the Université Mohammed V-Souissi of Rabat.<sup>11</sup> Cognizant of this historical connections, I conducted archival research in Morocco in the summer of 2019 with the goal of sampling local libraries in search for relevant documentation, in manuscript format, on

<sup>8</sup> James McDougall and Judith Scheele (eds.), *Saharan Frontiers: Space and Mobility in Northwest Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012); Kathleen B. Berzock (ed.), *Caravans of Gold, Fragments in Time: Art, Culture, and Exchange Across Medieval Saharan Africa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press and the Block Museum of Arts, Northwestern University, 2019). See also theoretical contributions such as E. Ann. McDougall, “Research in Saharan History,” *Journal of African History* 39–3 (1998), 467–480; Ghislaine Lydon, “Saharan Oceans and Bridges, Barriers and Divides in Africa’s Historiographical Landscape,” *Journal of African History* 56–1 (2015), 3–22; and Baz Lecocq, “Distant Shores: A Historiographic View on Trans-Saharan space,” *Journal of African History* 56–1 (2015), 23–36.

<sup>9</sup> Mauro Nobili, “African History and Islamic Manuscript Cultures,” in Brigaglia, Andrea and Nobili, Mauro (eds.), *The Arts and Crafts of Literacy: Manuscript Cultures in Muslim Sub-Saharan Africa* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017), 5–6.

<sup>10</sup> Edward W. Bovill, *The Golden Trade of the Moors* (London: Oxford University Press, 1968); Ghislaine Lydon, *On Trans-Saharan Trails: Islamic Law, Trade Networks, and Cross-Cultural Exchange in Nineteenth-Century Western Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); and Chouki El Hamel, *Black Morocco: A History of Slavery, Race, and Islam* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

<sup>11</sup> Ahmed Touqif (ed.), *Le Maroc et l’Afrique subsaharienne aux débuts des temps modernes: les Sa’adiens et l’empire Songhay. Actes du colloque international organisé par l’Institut des études africaines, Marrakech, 23–25 octobre 1992* (Rabat: Université Mohammed V, Publication de l’Institut des Etudes Africaines, 1995); and Abdallah Saaf (ed.), *Le Maroc et l’Afrique après l’indépendance. Actes de la journée d’étude organisée par l’Institut des études africaines et le Département de droit public de la Faculté des sciences juridiques, économiques et sociales de l’Université Mohammed V, Agdal, Rabat, le 26 novembre 1994* (Rabat: Université Mohammed V, Publications de l’Institut des Etudes Africaines, 1996).

West African history. An outcome of this archival research, this article has two goals. Empirically, it showcases the wealth of primary sources on the history of West Africa south of the Sahara that is available in Morocco. At the same time, from a theoretical perspective, this article argues against the fictitious, rather harmful division of the continent into two discrete regions, separated by the Saharan desert.

I focus specifically on manuscripts housed at the two most important libraries of Morocco: The Bibliothèque Royale Hasaniyya / al-Khizāna al-Ḥasaniyya (henceforth KhḤ) and the Bibliothèque Nationale du Royaume du Maroc / al-Maktaba al-Waṭāniyya li-l-Mamlakat al-Maghribiyya (henceforth BNRM), both in Rabat.<sup>12</sup> In these two archives, I have identified two clusters of manuscripts that are useful to support my argument:

- 1) “Earlier Materials” (c. fifteenth to seventeenth century), which comprises the writings of al-Maghīlī (d. 1503–4 or 1504–5); evidence of the Moroccan conquest of the Niger Bend of the late sixteenth-century; and the works of some of the members of the Timbuktu-based scholarly family of the Aqīt, including Aḥmad Bābā, and of the descendants and the students of Aḥmad Bābā’s renowned teacher Muḥammad Baghayogho (d. 1594).
- 2) “The Kunta, the Qādirī-Tijānī dispute; and other Fulani scholars” (c. eighteenth to nineteenth century), which comprises the works of several scholars of the prominent Kunta clan from the Azawād; manuscript evidence on the heated debates between the members of the Qādiriyya and the Tijāniyya Sufi brotherhoods, including works of the peripatetic intellectual and political figure *al-ḥāj* ‘Umar Tall (d. 1864); writings of other Fulani scholars from West Africa.

As a final remark, I want to stress the preliminary nature of this article. I do not aim to be exhaustive. I have worked only with the available catalogues, which only partially cover the holdings of KhḤ and BNRM. Furthermore, my enquiry was dictated by my own research agenda.<sup>13</sup> Hence, this article provides only a glimpse of the richness of Moroccan archival sources and aims at encouraging further research in Morocco and, more generally, in North African archives to widen our corpus of primary sources on West African history. At the same times, this article also contributes to a critique of the

<sup>12</sup> A comprehensive introduction to Moroccan archives is Jocelyn Hendrickson, “A Guide to Arabic Manuscript Libraries in Morocco, with Notes on Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, and Spain,” *Middle Eastern Library Association Notes* 80 (2008), 15–88; Jocelyn Hendrickson and Sabahat Adil, “A Guide to Arabic Manuscript Libraries on Morocco: Further Developments,” *Middle Eastern Library Association Notes* 85 (2013), 1–19. On the history of Moroccan libraries, see Latifa Benjelloun-Laroui, *Les bibliothèques au Maroc* (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 1990); Ahmed-Chouqui Binebine, *Histoire des bibliothèques au Maroc* (Rabat: Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines, 1992).

<sup>13</sup> My focus being the Middle Niger led me to neglect, for example, the works of the Fodiawa elite of the Sokoto Caliphate (1804–1903), widely represented in the archives.

Areas Studies paradigm and advocates for a continental approach to African history.

### The Archives and Method

The two libraries I visited have very different histories: the first, the Bibliothèque Royale Hasaniyya / al-Khizāna al-Ḥasaniyya, is a four-centuries old institution tied to the establishment of the ‘Alawī dynasty (1631–present) of Morocco; and the second, the Bibliothèque Nationale du Royaume du Maroc / al-Maktaba al-Waṭāniyya li-l-Mamlakat al-Maghribiyya traces its roots to the French colonial period.

Libraries in Morocco have a long history, as Latifa Benjelloun-Laroui remarks in her history of the Moroccan libraries,

The rulers of Morocco, regardless the dynasty they belonged to, were cultivated men, often sophisticate literati, consummate jurists, skillful theologians, even established and experienced mathematicians. Well before their accession to power, while only princes and representative of their fathers, they had at their disposal libraries to which the scholars of the royal court had access and where they could find rare manuscripts to improve their collections.<sup>14</sup>

Hence, since the very early history of Moroccan dynasties, direct and indirect evidences point to the slow but steady emergence of libraries attached to the royal palaces.<sup>15</sup> The KhḤ was created by the founder of the ‘Alawī dynasty itself, Mūlāy al-Rashīd (d. 1672), described by Ahmed-Chouqi Binebine, as “a scholar and a patron.”<sup>16</sup> The ruler sized libraries of local *zāwīyas* (Sufi lodges and centers of learning) and that of the defeated Sa‘adī dynasty (1549–1659) to create the embryo of the KhḤ in Fès and enriched it with books copied on his behalf. The library then expanded with further purchases, copies, requisitions and moved to the different palaces, first in Meknès and then in Marrakesh. Eventually, it was moved in 1961 by the king Ḥassan II (d. 1999) in Rabat, where it is located today, and became accessible in 1962 to researchers.<sup>17</sup> Currently located in the royal palace, the KhḤ holds c. 45,000 works in 15,000 manuscripts, not including archival documents, lithographs, and printed books.<sup>18</sup> An ongoing process of

<sup>14</sup> Benjelloun-Laroui, *Les bibliothèques au Maroc*, 21.

<sup>15</sup> On the history of the different dynastic libraries, including the current ‘Alawī one, see Benjelloun-Laroui, *Les bibliothèques au Maroc*, 21–73; and Binebine, *Histoire des bibliothèques au Maroc*, 18–27, 36–41, 66–76.

<sup>16</sup> Binebine, *Histoire des bibliothèques au Maroc*, 72.

<sup>17</sup> Hendrickson, “A Guide to Arabic Manuscript Libraries in Morocco, with Notes,” 32.

<sup>18</sup> The estimate is given by Hendrickson on the basis of an information provided by the Dr. Binebine (Hendrickson, “A Guide to Arabic Manuscript Libraries in Morocco, with Notes,” 34).

cataloguing resulted in the publication of 13 thematic catalogues<sup>19</sup> and a general index.<sup>20</sup>

As for the BNRM, it was founded as the Bibliothèque Générale with public access in 1919, only seven years after the establishment of the French Protectorate on Morocco (which lasted until 1956).<sup>21</sup> The first Resident-General, Hubert Lyautey (d. 1917), decided to open a public library in the newly established capital in Morocco, as part of the broader plan of documenting Moroccan history, which involved several activities, including the opening of the Institut des Hautes Etudes Marocaines and publication of famous journals such as the *Hesperis: Archives Berbères et Bulletin de l'Institut des Hautes-Études Marocaines* (published today as *Hesperis-Tamuda*).<sup>22</sup> Renamed in 1926 as Bibliothèque Générale et Archives, the BNRM eventually assumed its current name in 2003.<sup>23</sup> A 2007 estimate refers to c. 13,000 manuscripts with 34,000 titles as the holdings of the *Department d'archives et des manuscrits* of BNRM—and the number refers only to actual works and not archival documents.<sup>24</sup> These manuscripts entered the BNRM via purchases, donations, pious endowments (*ḥubūs*), and confiscations.<sup>25</sup>

At the BNRM, I focused specifically on five collections, marked with the Arabic letters:

- *Dāl*—which stands for *dhakhīrat al-maktaba* or “library holdings.” This collection comprises the manuscripts that were in the possession of the BNRM when it opened, plus later additions<sup>26</sup>

<sup>19</sup> For full bibliographic references, see Hendrickson, “A Guide to Arabic Manuscript Libraries in Morocco, with Notes,” 6–8, 36–39.

<sup>20</sup> Aḥmad Shauqī Binbīn (Ahmed-Chouqui Binebine) and ‘Umar ‘Ammūr (Omar Ammor), *Kashshāf al-kutub al-makḥṭū‘āt bi-l-Khizāna al-Ḥasaniyya / Index général des manuscrits arabes de la Bibliothèque Royale (Hassania)* (al-Ribāṭ: al-Khizāna al-Ḥasaniyya, 2007).

<sup>21</sup> Binebine, *Histoire des bibliothèques au Maroc*, 131.

<sup>22</sup> Benjelloun-Laroui, *Les bibliothèques au Maroc*, 210. *Hesperis-Tamuda* is accessible today online at <http://www.hesperis-tamuda.com/en/>.

<sup>23</sup> Hendrickson, “A Guide to Arabic Manuscript Libraries in Morocco, with Notes,” 32.

<sup>24</sup> Hendrickson, “A Guide to Arabic Manuscript Libraries in Morocco, with Notes,” 23.

<sup>25</sup> Benjelloun-Laroui, *Les bibliothèques au Maroc*, 229–230.

<sup>26</sup> Évariste Lévi-Provençal, *Les manuscrits arabes de Rabat* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1921)—henceforth BNRM Cat. 1; translated into Arabic and revised in Šālih al-Tādīlī and Sa‘īd al-Murābiṭī, *Fihris al-makḥṭū‘āt al-‘arabiyya al-mahfūza fi al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma bi-l-Ribāṭ: al-mujallad al-awwal* (al-Dār al-Bayḍā’ [Casablanca]: Maṭba‘at al-najāḥ al-jadīda, 1997–1998)—henceforth BNRM Cat. 1bis; Y. S. ‘Allūsh, and ‘Abd Allāh al-Rajrājī, *Fihris al-makḥṭū‘āt al-‘arabiyya al-mahfūza fi al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma bi-l-Ribāṭ: al-qism al-thānī* (1921–1953), 2 vols. [al-Dār al-Bayḍā’ [Casablanca]: al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma li-l-Kutub wa-al-Wathā‘iq, 2001—henceforth BNRM Cat. 2 and BNRM Cat. 3; Y. S. ‘Allūsh, and ‘Abd Allāh al-Rajrājī, *Fihris al-makḥṭū‘āt al-‘arabiyya al-mahfūza fi al-Khizāna*

- *Kāf*—from ‘Abd al-Ḥāy al-Kattānī (d. 1962–1963) whose library was confiscated in 1956 and deposited at the BNRM<sup>27</sup>
- *Qāf*—from *awqāf* for “pious endowments” and includes, among others, manuscripts from the Zāwiya of the Nāṣiriyya brotherhood in Tamgrūt, from the Grand Mosques of Rabat and Meknès<sup>28</sup>
- *Hā’*—from Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ḥajwī (d. 1956) whose library was also confiscated after Moroccan independence and deposited to the BNRM<sup>29</sup>
- *Jim Kāf*—from Muḥammad b. Muḥammad b. Ja‘far al-Kattānī (d. 1927), whose descendants donated these manuscripts to the BNRM<sup>30</sup>

In what follows, I will present the most important document concerning West African history that I have analyzed in KhḤ and BNRM. For each work, I refer in the footnote to the

- 1) call number;
- 2) entry in the KhḤ and BNRM catalogues;
- 3) and reference to the multi-volume John O. Hunwick et al., *The Arabic Literature of Africa*, 5 vols. (Leiden – Boston: Brill, 1993–), specifically to the volumes: John O. Hunwick, *The Arabic Literature of Africa. Vol. 2: The Writings of Central Sudanic Africa* (Leiden: Brill, 1995) (henceforth *ALA* II); and John O. Hunwick, *The Arabic Literature of Africa. Vol. 4: The Writings of Western Sudanic Africa* (Leiden: Brill – Boston, 2003) (henceforth *ALA* IV).

To identify authors, in the main text I use the name by which each is typically referred to, but for the sake of identification and searchability, I have used in footnotes the form recorded in Hunwick in *ALA*. In the case of works that appear in the local catalogues with a slightly different title than the one that Hunwick records, I use in the main text the one in the catalogues of KhḤ and BNRM, and in the footnote I will refer to the alternative titled listed in *ALA*.

---

*al-‘Āmma bi-l-Ribāṭ: al-qism al-thālith* (1954–1957) (Rabāt: Wizārat al-Awqāf wa-al-Shu‘ūn al-Islāmiyya wa-al-Thaqāfiyya, 1973)—henceforth BNRM Cat. 4; Muḥammad I. al-Kattānī and Ṣāliḥ al-Tādili, *Fihris al-makhṭūṭāt al-‘arabiyya al-mahfūzaa fī al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma bi-l-Ribāṭ* (al-Dār al-Bayḍā’ [Casablanca: al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma li-l-Kutub wa-al-Wathā’iq, 1997)—henceforth BNRM Cat. 5.

<sup>27</sup> Muḥammad al-Manūnī, *Fihris al-makhṭūṭāt al-‘arabiyya al-mahfūza fī al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma bi-l-Ribāṭ*. (al-Dār al-Bayḍā’ [Casablanca: al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma li-l-Kutub wa-al-Wathā’iq, 1999–2000)—henceforth BNRM Cat. 6.

<sup>28</sup> Sa‘īd al-Murābiṭī, *Fihris al-makhṭūṭāt al-‘arabiyya al-mahfūza fī al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma bi-l-Ribāṭ* (al-Dār al-Bayḍā’ [Casablanca]: al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma li-l-Kutub wa-al-Wathā’iq, 2002)—henceforth BNRM Cat. 7.

<sup>29</sup> *Fihris al-makhṭūṭāt al-‘arabiyya al-mahfūza bi-l-Maktaba al-Waṭaniyya li-l-Mamlaka al-Maghribiyya: al-mujallad al-thāmin, majmū‘at Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ḥajwī (raṣīd ḥarf al-Hā’)* (Rabāt: Al-Maktaba al-Waṭaniyya li-l-Mamlaka al-Maghribiyya, 2009)—henceforth BNRM Cat. 8.

<sup>30</sup> *Fihris al-makhṭūṭāt al-‘arabiyya al-mahfūza bi-l-Maktaba al-Waṭaniyya li-l-Mamlaka al-Maghribiyya: al-mujallad al-tāsi: Majmū‘at Muḥammad b. Ja‘far al-Kattānī (raṣīd ḥarf Jim Kāf)* (Rabāt: Al-Maktaba al-Waṭaniyya li-l-Mamlaka al-Maghribiyya, 2011)—henceforth BNRM Cat. 9.

Lastly, I will only list in footnotes the existing translations into English and French of the manuscripts that I analyze, when existing, but not the Arabic editions, which are listed by Hunwick in *ALA*.

## Earlier Materials (c. Fifteenth–c. Seventeenth Centuries)

### *The Works of al-Maghīlī*

The KhḤ and the BNRM preserve a large corpus of works by Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī.<sup>31</sup> Born in Tlemḥen on the Mediterranean shores of contemporary Algeria sometime in the middle of the fifteenth century, this controversial scholar exemplifies the connection between North Africa and the regions south of the Sahara. Al-Maghīlī travelled extensively in West Africa after his disputes with other North African jurists concerning the status of the Jewish community in Tamentit. This dispute is represented by several copies of the al-Maghīlī’s *Ta’līfī-mā yajib ‘alā al-muslimīn min ijtināb al-kuffār*, a polemical work in which the Saharan jurist argues that the prosperous conditions of Jews of Tuwāt was against the principle of abasement of the *dhimma* (protection).<sup>32</sup>

Some of the entries of the KhḤ and the BNRM confuse the *Ta’līfī* with another of al-Maghīlī’s treatise, the *Misbāḥ al-arwāḥ fī uṣūl al-falāḥ*, which includes similar arguments but also questions associated to *tawhīd* (theology) and *ma’rifā* (gnosis).<sup>33</sup> The latter work is lost and only known in the extensive passages quoted by another North African scholar, Ibrāhīm b. Hilālī al-Sijilmāsī (d. 1497), who wrote his “notes” (*taqāyīd*), available in its only extant copy at BRNM, in refutation of the arguments of the *Misbāḥ*.<sup>34</sup> Al-Maghīlī also composed a *qaṣīda* (poem) in rhyme *dāl* against the Jews of Tuwāt.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Muḥammad b. ‘Abd al-Karīm al-Maghīlī al-Tilimsānī (*ALA* II, 20–25). See also Hassan I. Gwarzo, “The Life and Teachings of al-Maghīlī, with Particular Reference to the Saharan Jewish Community” (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of London, 1972).

<sup>32</sup> BNRM/D.1602, ff. 206–213 (cat. 2/1386); BNRM/D.2013, ff. 365–380 (cat. 4/3392); BNRM/D.2223, ff. 379–396 (cat. 4/3393); BNRM/D.2530, ff. 1–16 (cat. 4/3392); BNRM/D.2889, ff. 83–99 (cat. 4/3392); BNRM/K.322 (cat. 4/3392); KhḤ 1683; KhḤ 6331; KhḤ 6830; KhḤ 12123; KhḤ 12212; KhḤ 12428; KhḤ 12525; KhḤ 13993; on the *Ta’līfī*, see *ALA* II, 24–25, item 27. This work is translated in Gwarzo, “The Life and Teachings,” 97–160. On the history of al-Maghīlī and the Jews of Tuwāt, see John O. Hunwick, *Jews of a Saharan Oasis: Elimination of the Tamantit Community* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2006).

<sup>33</sup> *ALA* II, 22, item 12. On the confusion between the *Ta’līfī* and the *Misbāḥ*, see Gwarzo, “The Life and Teachings,” 11–12.

<sup>34</sup> BNRM/D.3660, ff. 179–247 (cat. 3.1/3392); on these *taqāyīd*, see *ALA* II, 22–23, item 13.

<sup>35</sup> KhḤ 12695; on this *qaṣīda*, see *ALA* II, 23, item 19.



In West Africa, al-Maghīlī stayed at the court of Gao, the capital of the Songhay Empire, where he wrote the famous “Replies” to the king Askīyà al-ḥājj Muḥammad (d. 1538), which is very widespread in West Africa but not available in the Moroccan archives I visited.<sup>36</sup> Prior to stay Gao, in the 1490s, al-Maghīlī visited the Hausa city-states of Kano and Katsina. During his time in Hausaland, he wrote two other treatises of advice to Muḥammad Rumfa (r. 1463–1499), king of Kano. One of these treatises, the *Risāla fī umūr al-saltāna* (also known with different names such as the *Tāj al-dīn fī mā yajib ‘alā al-mulūk min al-istiḡāma wa-l-‘adl wa-l-naẓr fī al-maṣāliḥ*), is available at BNRM.<sup>37</sup>

Among the other works of al-Maghīlī, unrelated to his stay in West Africa, are two other works preserved in Morocco, namely the only copy of a *sharḥ* (commentary) he wrote on an influential treatise in verses on logic he had previously composed, which is titled *Mināḥ al-Wahhāb fī radd al-fikr ‘alā al-ṣawāb*,<sup>38</sup> and a treatise on *kalām* (speculative theology) only available at KhḤ.<sup>39</sup>

### *The Moroccan Conquest of the Niger Bend*

While the case of al-Maghīlī exemplifies the intellectual exchanges between North African scholars and West African nobles, the history of the two shores of the Sahara is also characterized by moments of tension and violence. One such instance is the Moroccan conquest of the Niger Bend and the Songhay Empire, a pivotal event symbolically marked by the Battle of Tondibi (13 March 1591), a location 30 miles north of the capital city Gao.<sup>40</sup> Surprisingly, this event in the history of West Africa has left few traces in the North African archives that I have explored, as I have only found two relevant manuscripts in the KhḤ and BNRM.

The first is the only existing copy of letter from the Moroccan king Aḥmad al-Manṣūr listed with the descriptive title: *Kitāb Aḥmad al-Manṣūr*

<sup>36</sup> John O. Hunwick, *Sharī‘a in Songhay: The Replies of al-Maghīlī to the Questions of Askia Al-Ḥājj Muḥammad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

<sup>37</sup> BNRM/D.364, ff. 233–243 (cat. 1/529); BNRM/D.1816, ff. 217–226 (cat. 5/4039); on this work, see ALA II, 23–24, item 21. This text is translated in T. H. Baldwin, *The Obligations of Princes: An Essay on Moslem Kingship by Sheikh Mohammed al-Maghīlī of Tlemsen* (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1932); and K. I. Bedri and P. E. Starratt, “*Tāj al-dīn fī mā yajib ‘alā al-mulūk*, or ‘The Crown of Religion concerning the obligations of the princes,’” *Kano Studies* N.S. 1–2 (1974/77), 15–28.

<sup>38</sup> D.2231, ff. 1–26 (cat. 4/3131); on ALA II, 22, item 12.

<sup>39</sup> KhḤ 13446, ff. 137–157; KhḤ 13722, ff. 50–91. This treatise is not listed in ALA II.

<sup>40</sup> The classic study on the Moroccan conquest of the Songhay Empire and of the centuries that followed with the Arma, the descendants of the Moroccan soldiers, in charge of a loose, independent polity along the Niger, is Michel Abitbol, *Tombouctou et les Arma: de la Conquête Marocaine du Soudan Nigérien en 1591 à l’hégémonie de l’empire Peulh du Macina en 1833* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1979).

*li-ahl Fās yukhbiruhum bi-fath bilād al-Sūdān*, meaning “Letter from Aḥmad al-Manṣūr to the people of Fez informing them about the conquest of the Land of the Blacks”<sup>41</sup>—which is in fact composed by the head of the court chancery ‘Abd al-‘Azīz al-Fishtālī (d. 1621).<sup>42</sup> This letter represents a piece of an extensive documentary corpus of correspondence concerning the Moroccan conquest of the Niger Bend that awaits full examination.<sup>43</sup>

The second is an incomplete copy of the famous Timbuktu chronicle known as the *Tārīkh al-Sūdān*, which was written in seventeenth century by al-Sa‘dī (d. after 1655–1656).<sup>44</sup> This chronicle extensively covers the events of the Moroccan conquest of the Songhay Empire, and the KhḤ copy is potentially a relevant manuscript, as it was not used by Octave V. Houdas in his Arabic edition and translation into French, nor by Hunwick in his translation of *Tārīkh al-Sūdān* into the English.

### *Aḥmad Bābā, the Aqīt, and the Baghayogho*

A consequence of the Moroccan conquest of the Songhay Empire was the capture and exile of several notables of Timbuktu who were taken as captives in North Africa.<sup>45</sup> Hence, it comes as no surprise that the West African scholar most represented in the KhḤ and the BNRM is Aḥmad Bābā of Timbuktu (d. 1826).<sup>46</sup> Aḥmad Bābā, who acquired important fame during his forced

<sup>41</sup> KhḤ 7248, ff. 1–15.

<sup>42</sup> ‘Abd Allāh Gannūn, *al-Nubūgh al-maghribī fī al-adab al-‘arabī* (Beirut: Dār al-kutub al-‘ilmya, 1971), 331–332.

<sup>43</sup> Some of these letters exist in print in ‘Abd Allāh Gannūn, *Rasā‘il Sa‘adiyya* (Tiṭwān: Ma‘had Mawlāya al-Ḥasan, 1954) and Muḥammad al-Gharbī, *Bidāyat al-ḥukm al-Maghribī fī al-Sūdān al-gharbī* (Baghdād: Dār al-Rashīd li-l-Nashr 1982). Five of these published letters are translated in John O. Hunwick, *Timbuktu and the Songhay Empire: al-Sa‘dī’s Ta rīkh al-Sūdān down to 1613, and other Contemporary Documents* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 294–308.

<sup>44</sup> KhḤ 1403; on the *Tārīkh al-Sūdān*, see ALA IV, 40–41, item 1. The *Tārīkh al-Sūdān* exists in an edition and translation into French: Octave V. Houdas, *Tārīkh es-Soudan par Abderrahman ben Abdallah ben ‘Imran ben ‘Amir es-Sa‘dī*, 2 vols. (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1898–1900); most of its text is also translated into English in Hunwick, *Timbuktu and the Songhay Empire*, 1–270.

<sup>45</sup> For details on the events that led to Aḥmad Bābā’s capture, see John O. Hunwick, “Aḥmad Bābā and the Moroccan Invasion of the Sudan (1591),” *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 2–3 (1962), 311–328. On the author ‘Abd al-Raḥmān b. ‘Abd Allāh b. ‘Imrān b. ‘Amir al-Sa‘dī, see ALA IV, 40.

<sup>46</sup> Aḥmad Bābā b. Aḥmad b. *al-ḥājj* Aḥmad b. ‘Umar b. Muḥammad Aqīt al-Timbuktī al-Sūdānī al-Masūfī al-Timbuktī (ALA IV, 17–31); see also Mahmoud A. Zouber, *Aḥmad Bābā de Tombouctou (1556–1627), Sa Vie et Son Œuvre* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1977). See also the booklet devoted to Aḥmad Bābā’s manuscripts in Moroccan libraries: Ḥasan al-Ṣādqī, *Makḥṭu‘āt Aḥmad Bābā al-Timbuktī fī al-khazā’in al-Maghribiyya* (Rabat: Université Mohammed V, Publications de l’Institut des Etudes Africaines, 1996).

stay in Morocco between 1594 and 1608, belonged to the Berber family of the Aqīt who emerged in Timbuktu in the second half of the fifteenth century as a prominent scholarly lineage of the city. The earliest member of the Aqīt to become a renowned scholar was Maḥmūd b. ‘Umar Aqīt (d. 1548), who was the *qāḍī* of Timbuktu.<sup>47</sup> Maḥmūd b. ‘Umar Aqīt is remembered as the one who introduced in Timbuktu the teaching of the famous manual of jurisprudence the *Mukhtaṣar* (Abridgment) of Khalīl b. Ishāq (d. 1365).<sup>48</sup> Testimony of his engagement with this important work is a commentary (*A. Ḥāshiyā*) of the *Mukhtaṣar*, which is preserved only at the KhḤ.<sup>49</sup>

Son of Maḥmūd b. ‘Umar Aqīt’s brother, Aḥmad Bābā contributed to numerous fields of Islamic sciences with several works, some of which are available in Moroccan libraries. Among these are the two famous biographical dictionaries of Mālīkī scholars: the *Nayl al-ibtihāj bi-tat-rīz al-Dibāj* (806 bibliographic entries) and the *Kifāyat al-muhtāj li-ma’rifat man laysa fī al-Dibāj* (with 704 entries).<sup>50</sup> Written while Aḥmad Bābā was in Morocco respectively in 1596 and 1603, these works were composed as supplement to Ibn Farḥūn’s (d. 1397) *Dibāj al-mudhahhab fī ma’rifat a’yān al-madhhab*.

Knowledge and the role of scholars was a topic particularly dear to Aḥmad Bābā. His *Tuḥfat al-fulḍalā bi-ba’ḍ faḍā’il al-‘ulamā’*, composed in Morocco in 1603, focuses on the merit of knowledge and the role of ‘ulamā’.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Maḥmūd b. ‘Umar b. Muḥammad Aqīt al-Ṣanhājī al-Masūfī, Abū al-Maḥāssin, Abū al-Thana’ (*ALA* IV, 13–14).

<sup>48</sup> On the role of the *Mukhtaṣar* of Khalīl in West Africa, see Bruce S. Hall and Charles C. Stewart, “The Historic ‘Core Curriculum’ and the Book Market in Islamic West Africa,” in Krätli, Graziano and Lydon, Ghislaine (eds.), *The Trans-Saharan Book Trade: Manuscript Culture, Arabic Literacy, and Intellectual History in Muslim Africa* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 132–133.

<sup>49</sup> KhḤ 4338; KhḤ 4339; KhḤ 4341; KhḤ 7027; KhḤ 8708; KhḤ 8745; KhḤ 9735; KhḤ 9738; KhḤ 10478; KhḤ 11236; KhḤ 11574; KhḤ 12913; KhḤ 12931; KhḤ 13097; KhḤ 13148; KhḤ 13209; on this work see *ALA* IV, 14, item 2 (listed as *Sarḥ Mukhtaṣar Khalīl*).

<sup>50</sup> See copies of the *Nayl al-ibtihāj* BNRM/D.766 (cat. 3/2229); BNRM/D.1975 (cat. 5/3944); KhḤ 99; KhḤ 1274; KhḤ 1896; KhḤ 2139; KhḤ 2358; KhḤ 4206 KhḤ 9902; KhḤ 11311; KhḤ 13144; KhḤ 13910; KhḤ 3302. Copies of the *Kifāyat al-muhtāj*, KhḤ 453; KhḤ 681; KhḤ 1741; KhḤ 1970; KhḤ 2045; KhḤ 3029; KhḤ 8077; KhḤ 11626; KhḤ 12730; KhḤ 13996. On the *Nayl al-ibtihāj*, see *ALA* IV, 27, item 45. An anonymous commentary of this work, the *Taqyīdat mukhtaṣara ‘alā Nayl al-ibtihāj*, is also in BNRM (D.1641, ff. 321–335 [cat. 3/2230]); on this abridgment see *ALA* IV, 27, item 45. As of the the *Kifāyat al-muhtāj*, see *ALA* IV, 23, item 27. Partially translated in M. A. Cherbonneau, “Essai sur la littérature arabe au Soudan d’après le Tekmilet ed-Dibadje d’Ahmed Baba le Tombouctien,” *Annales de la société archéologique de Constantine* 2 (1854–1855), 1–42.

<sup>51</sup> BNRM/D.1641, ff. 302–321 (cat. 3/2260); KhḤ 5534; KhḤ 5675; KhḤ 6308; on the *Tuḥfat al-fulḍalā* see *ALA* IV, 30, item 66. Translated in Said Sami and Mohamed Zniber, *Tuḥfat al-fulḍalā bi-ba’ḍ faḍā’il al-‘ulamā’* (Rabat: Université Mohammed V, Publications de l’Institut des Etudes Africaines, 1992).

Aḥmad Bābā also explored the issue of the relationship between empirical knowledge and gnosis. The role of scholars, vis-à-vis the prince, repository of political power, is the topic explored in one of his earlier works, completed in Timbuktu 1589, the *Jalb al-naʿma wa-dafʿ al-naqma bi-mujānabat al-zalama wa-dhāwī al-zulm* (also listed as *Taqyīd fi-mā jāʿa fi taḥdhīr min qurb al-zalama wa-maṣāḥabatihim ʿulban li-ḥiṭām al-dunyā*), in which Aḥmad Bābā expresses his view on the essential dichotomy between temporal power and religious knowledge.<sup>52</sup>

The bulk of the works composed by the Timbuktu-based scholar pertains to the field of jurisprudence, in which Aḥmad Bābā excelled. Most famous is his 1615 *fatwā* on slavery titled *Miʿrāj al-ṣuʿūd ilā nāyl ḥukm mujallab al-sūd*, represented in multiple copies.<sup>53</sup> Composed in Timbuktu, in this legal opinion Aḥmad Bābā argues against a racial argument widespread among slave traders across the Sahara that every Black African was enslavable regardless of his/her being a Muslim.<sup>54</sup> Besides the legal arguments, this work also bears witness of another facet of the relationship between North and West Africa, which is the history of the enslavement of dark-skinned Africans and their forced relocation from the regions south of the Sahara into those north of the desert.<sup>55</sup>

Most of Aḥmad Bābā's writings in the field of jurisprudence are derivative works from classical Muslim jurists. For example, he penned a commentary

<sup>52</sup> BNRM/D.517, ff. 198–221 (cat. 1/54–11 & cat. 1bis/543–16); BNRM/Q.84 (cat 7, 209); KhḤ 3731; KhḤ 5534; KhḤ 12453; KhḤ 13442; KhḤ 13729; on the *Jalb al-naʿma*, see *ALA IV*, 22, item 23.

<sup>53</sup> BNRM/D.194, ff. 26–38 (cat. 1/508-3 & cat. 1bis/508-3); BNRM/D.478, ff. 230-242 (cat. 1, 534–7 & cat 1bis/534–7); D.1079, ff. 83–87 (Cat. 2, 1447); BNRM/D.1724-1, ff. 1–7 (cat. 4/3398); KhḤ 3565; KhḤ 7248; KhḤ 7579; KhḤ 12580; KhḤ 14001; KhḤ 14031; on this work, see *ALA IV*, 26, item 38. Translated in John O. Hunwick and Fatima Harrak, *Miʿrāj al-Ṣuʿūd: Aḥmad Bābā's Replies on Slavery* (Rabat: Université Mohammed V, Publications de l'Institut des Etudes Africaines, 2000).

<sup>54</sup> As Timothy Cleaveland notes, Aḥmad Bābā is not arguing against slavery or the enslavement of Black Africans in general but more narrowly against the enslavement of Black Muslims (Timothy Cleaveland, "Ahmad Baba al-Timbukti and His Islamic Critique of Racial Slavery in the Maghrib," *Journal of North African Studies* 20–1 [2015], 42–64).

<sup>55</sup> On this topic see, among others, Hamel, *Black Morocco*; and Terence Walz and Kenneth M. Cuno (eds.), *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: Histories of Trans-Saharan Africans in Nineteenth-Century Egypt, Sudan, and the Ottoman Mediterranean* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010). See also excellent critical observations on this contentious topic in E. Ann McDougall, "Discourse and Distortion: Critical Reflections on Studying the Saharan Slave Trade," *Revue d'histoire d'outre-Mers* 336–337 (2002), 195–227; and Dahlia E. M. Gubara, "Revisiting Race and Slavery through 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti's 'Aja'ib al-athar," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 38–2 (2018), 230–245.

on the *al-I'lām bi-hudūd qawā'id al-Islam* by *al-qāḍī* 'Iyād (d. 1149)<sup>56</sup> and other one on Abū Zayd 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Ru'qī's (d. 1554-5) versification of the *Muqaddima* by Ibn Rushd "the grandfather" (d. 1126).<sup>57</sup> However, the work Aḥmad Bābā commented most upon was the *Mukhtaṣar* of Khalīl on which he wrote several derivative pieces, namely the 1606 *Ta'līq 'alā qawl Khalīl fi ākhar al-khayār* "*wa-khayr al-mushtarī*", which focuses on trade;<sup>58</sup> as well as the numerous pieces on marriage-related subjects: the 1583 *Tanbīh al-wāqif 'alā taḥqīq* "*wa-khaṣṣaṣat niyyat al-hālīf*";<sup>59</sup> and its later abridgment, the *Irshād al-wāqif li-ma'nā* "*wa-khaṣṣaṣat niyyat al-hālīf*", composed in 1605;<sup>60</sup> the *Anfas al-a'lāq fi fath al-istighlāq min fahm kalam Khalīl fi darak an-ṣadāq* dated 1606 and composed in Morocco;<sup>61</sup> the *Iḥām al-sāmi' bi-ma'nā qawl Khalīl fi al-nikāḥ bi-l-manāfi*;<sup>62</sup> *Fath al-Razzāq fi mas'alat al-shaq fi al-ḥalāq*, written in Morocco in 1606;<sup>63</sup> the very early work *al-Maqṣid al-kafil bi-halla muḥfal Khalīl*, dated to 1583 and of which the only extant copy is at the BNRM;<sup>64</sup> and its 1609 gloss titled *Minan al-rabb al-jatīl bi-bayān muḥimmāt Khalīl*, which includes also multiple issues of jurisprudence.<sup>65</sup>

In the field of jurisprudence, Aḥmad Bābā was also active in the debate on the legality of the consumption and trade of tobacco, which, by the early seventeenth-century, was a new commodity in the Islamic world that in fact reached North Africa from the Guinea Gulf and Timbuktu.<sup>66</sup> A fervent supporter of the opinion that tobacco is a *ḥalāl* plant, he wrote on this topic in prose in his *al-Lam' fi al-ishāra li-ḥukm al-tibgh* written in 1607 in Tamgrūt while on his way back to Timbuktu, in response to a request of a local scholar;<sup>67</sup> and in verses, the *Qaṣīda qāfiyya fi sharb al-dukhān*<sup>68</sup> and the *Manzūma fi intishār tābigha*.<sup>69</sup>

Aḥmad Bābā also contributed to the field of Grammar, with a very early work dated 1583, *al-Nukat al-mustajāda fi musāwāt al-fā'il wal-mubtada' fi shart*

<sup>56</sup> BNRM/H.33 (cat. 8. 159), not listed in ALA IV.

<sup>57</sup> BNRM/H.10 (cat. 8. 160), not listed in ALA IV

<sup>58</sup> KhḤ 9615, on which see ALA IV, 31, item 68 (listed as *al-Zand al-warī fi takhyīr al-mushtarī*).

<sup>59</sup> KhḤ 9226, on which see ALA IV, 32, item 62.

<sup>60</sup> KhḤ 9615, on which ALA IV, 22, item 21.

<sup>61</sup> KhḤ 7745; KhḤ 9616; KhḤ 1201; on the *Anfas al-a'lāq*, see ALA IV, 19, item 2.

<sup>62</sup> KhḤ 9616, on which ALA IV, 22, item 19.

<sup>63</sup> KhḤ 9615, on which see ALA IV, 21, item 13.

<sup>64</sup> BNRM/D.420 (cat. 1bis/181); BNRM/D.1360 (cat. 2/1492)—both copies listed as *Sharḥ 'alā Mukhtaṣar Khalīl*; on the *al-Maqṣid al-kafil*, see ALA IV, 25, item 33.

<sup>65</sup> KhḤ 4468; KhḤ 4975; KhḤ 11226; on the *Minan*, see ALA IV, 25, item 37.

<sup>66</sup> On the polemics concerning Tobacco in Islamic West Africa, see Aziz A. Batran, *Tobacco Smoking Under Islamic Law: Controversy Over its Introduction* (Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 2003); and Dorrit van Dalen, *Doubt, Scholarship and Society in 17<sup>th</sup>-Century Central Sudanic Africa* (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 154–187.

<sup>67</sup> KhḤ 12471, on which see ALA IV, 24, item 29.

<sup>68</sup> KhḤ 14068; this *qaṣīda* is not listed in ALA IV.

<sup>69</sup> KhḤ 12453; this *manzūma* is not listed in ALA IV.

*al-ifāda*, which is preserved only in Moroccan libraries, including a copy at the KhḤ;<sup>70</sup> and a commentary titled the *Fath al-muḥyī fi mas'alat ḥayīya*.<sup>71</sup> This work, composed in Morocco in 1599, comments upon some verses of Ibn Mālik's (d. 1203–1204 or 1304–1305) famous work on syntax, the *Alfiyya*.<sup>72</sup>

Sufism and devotional practices are also represented in Aḥmad Bābā's manuscripts in the KhḤ and the BNRM. A work celebrating the virtues on al-Sanūsī (d. 1486) is the *al-La'ālī al-sundusiyya fi faḍāil al-Sanūsīyya*, completed in Morocco in 1595, available in multiple copies at the BNRM.<sup>73</sup> This work, also composed in North Africa in 1594, is in turn an abridgment of Muḥammad al-Mallālī al-Tilimsānī's (fl. c. 1500) *al-Mawāhib al-qudsiyya*. Collections of prayers for the prophet at the *Khamā'il al-zahar fi-mā waradan min kaiḥiyyat al-ṣalāt 'alā sayyid al-bashar*, completed in 1615 after his return in Timbuktu;<sup>74</sup> and the *al-Durr al-naḍīr fi kaiḥiyyat al-ṣalāt 'alā al-bashīr*, composed in Morocco in 1606.<sup>75</sup> Finally, still in Morocco in 1598, Aḥmad Bābā composed the *Tanwīr al-qulūb bi-takfīr al-a'māl al-ṣāliḥa li-l-dhunūb*, a work on ritual purification in which he discussed the relationship between sins and pious actions.<sup>76</sup>

A celebrated teacher of Aḥmad Bābā was the Wangara scholar Muḥammad Baghayogho (d. 1594), who also belonged to a celebrated family of scholars based in Djenné and Timbuktu.<sup>77</sup> Although none of his works are found in the KhḤ and the BNRM, some of his descendants and students are represented in these libraries. His nephew, Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Baghayogho (d. 1655),<sup>78</sup> authored a work titled *al-Ḥawāshī al-mūjazāt 'alā al-khaṣā'ish wa-l-mu'jizāt*, available at KhḤ.<sup>79</sup> A famous student of Muḥammad Baghayogho was Muḥammad Bābā (d. 1606).<sup>80</sup> He was the author of *al-Minaḥ al-ḥamīda fi sharḥ al-Farīda*, a commentary on a work on grammar by the Egyptian polymath Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī (d. 1505).<sup>81</sup> Another student of Muḥammad Baghayogho's disciples was Aḥmad b. Anda Ag-Muḥammad

<sup>70</sup> KhḤ 12260, on which see *ALA* IV, 28, item 48.

<sup>71</sup> KhḤ 8228, on which see, *ALA* IV, 20–21, item 11.

<sup>72</sup> On the role of the *Alfiyya* in West Africa, see Hall and Stewart, "The Historic 'Core Curriculum,'" 121.

<sup>73</sup> BNRM/D.471, ff. 83–137 (cat. 1/407-2 & cat. 1bis/407–20); BNRM/D.2100, ff. 249–269 (cat. 5/3942); BNRM/D.984, ff. 107–132 (cat. 3/2241); on this work, see *ALA* IV, 24, item 28.

<sup>74</sup> KhḤ 14060, on which see *ALA* IV, 23, item 26.

<sup>75</sup> BNRM/D.1724, ff. 13–31 (cat. 5/4535), on which see *ALA* IV, 20, item 9.

<sup>76</sup> BNRM/D.1641, ff. 295–302 (cat. 4/3055); KhḤ 3754; KhḤ 13875; on the *Tanwīr al-qulūb*, see *ALA* IV, 31, item 64.

<sup>77</sup> Muḥammad b. Maḥmūd b. Abī Bakr al-Wangarī (*ALA* IV, 31–32).

<sup>78</sup> Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Maḥmūd b. Abī Bakr Baghayogho al-Wangarī (*ALA* IV, 32–33).

<sup>79</sup> KhḤ 13180; this work is not listed in *ALA* IV.

<sup>80</sup> Muḥammad Bābā b. Muḥammad al-Amin b. Ḥabīb b. al-Mukhtār (*ALA* IV, 34).

<sup>81</sup> BNRM K.1746; on the *al-Minaḥ al-ḥamīda*, see *ALA* IV, 34, item 2.

b. Aḥmad Buryu (d. 1634–1635).<sup>82</sup> The latter authored a 1593 commentary on Ibn Ajūrrum’s (d. 1323) *Ajūrrumiyya*, a basic manual of syntax very popular in West Africa, which is titled *al-Futūḥ al-qawmiyya fī sharḥ al-Ajūrrumiyya*, and is wrongly attributed in the catalogues of BNRM to Aḥmad Bābā.<sup>83</sup>

With the seventeenth century, the popularity of the Aqīt and the Baghayogho of Timbuktu waned, and the number of West African manuscripts represented in the KhḤ and the BNRM also declined, until a new phase in the intellectual, religious, and economic connections between North and West Africa was then triggered by the emergence of the Arabo-Berber Kunta clan of the Niger Bend.

## The Kunta and the Qādirī-Tijānī Dispute; and Other Fulani scholars (c. Eighteenth to Nineteenth Century)

### *The Kunta and the Qādirī-Tijānī Dispute*

The early history of the Kunta is shrouded in mystery.<sup>84</sup> Beyond a mythical phase, the establishment of the clan’s status as prominent scholars and traders in the second half of the 1700s is associated with the life of al-Mukhtār al-Kabīr (d. 1811).<sup>85</sup> His son and successor as the head of the Kunta family was

<sup>82</sup> Aḥmad b. Anda Ag-Muḥammad b. Aḥmad Buryu n. Aḥmad b. Anda Ag-Muḥammad (ALA IV, 36–27).

<sup>83</sup> BNRM/D.309, ff. 1–60 (cat. 1bis/521–1 & cat. 1bis/521–1); on the *al-Futūḥ al-qawmiyya* see ALA IV, 36, item. 1, while on the role of the *Ajūrrumiyya* in West Africa, see Hall and Stewart, “The Historic ‘Core Curriculum,’” 121.

<sup>84</sup> For an introduction to the history of the Kunta, between scholarship and economic enterprises, see E. Ann McDougall, “The Economics of Islam in the Southern Sahara: The Rise of the Kunta Clan,” in Levtzion, Nehemia and Fisher, Humphrey J. (eds.), *Rural and Urban Islam in West Africa* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1987), 39–54. See also Ariela Marcus-Sells, “The Kunta of the Sahara,” Oxford University Bibliographies, 2018, <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195390155/obo-9780195390155-0248.xml?rskey=L2cD0U&result=1&q=marcus-sells%5C#firstMatch>. Specifically devoted to the early history of the Kunta is Thomas Whitcomb, “New Evidence on the Origins of the Kunta – I,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 38–1 (1975), 103–123; and Thomas Whitcomb, “New Evidence on the Origins of the Kunta – II,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 38–2 (1975), 403–417.

<sup>85</sup> Al-Mukhtār b. Abī Bakr al-Kuntī al-Wāfī (ALA IV, 68–94); see also Aziz A. Batran, “Sīdī al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī and the recrudescence of Islam in the Western Sahara and the Middle Niger, c. 1750–1811 (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Birmingham, 1971), later published in a much-abridged version as Aziz A. Batran *The Qadiriyya Brotherhood in West Africa and the Western Sahara: The Life and Times of Shaykh Al-Mukhtār Al-Kuntī, 1729–1811* (Institut des Etudes Africaines, Rabat, 2001); and in the article Aziz A. Batran, “The Kunta, Sīdī al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī, and the office of Shaykh al-Ṭarīqa ’l-Qādirīyya,” in Willis, John R. (ed.), *Studies in West African Islamic History. Volume 1: The Cultivator of Islam* (London: Frank Cass, 1976): 114–146. See also

Muḥammad al-Kuntī (d. 1826).<sup>86</sup> The latter in turn left this role to his sons: al-Mukhtār al-Ṣaghīr (d. 1846) first,<sup>87</sup> and eventually Aḥmad al-Bakkāy (d. 1865), the last of the great Kunta scholars of precolonial West Africa.<sup>88</sup> With the exception for al-Mukhtār al-Ṣaghīr, works of all the other Kunta celebrated scholars are available in the KhḤ and the BNRN.

Al-Mukhtār al-Kabīr travelled extensively in today's Mauritania and Morocco, and his reformed Qādiriyya spread widely in North-Western Africa between Morocco and the Guinea forest and the Atlantic shores to the Hausaland.<sup>89</sup> Unsurprisingly, his works are extensively represented in the KhḤ and BNRN. Classifying al-Mukhtār al-Kabīr's writings is a difficult task due to the variety of the topics that he covers in treatises. An example of such variety is the *Nuzhat al-rāwī wa-bughyat al-hāwī*.<sup>90</sup> This work, in the words of today's most renowned traditional scholar of Timbuktu Mahamane Mahmoudou, known as Cheikh Hammou, "summarizes an entire library in one volume," covering issues of theology, Prophetic history, jurisprudence, Sufism, and more.<sup>91</sup> Other examples of works dealing with multiple subjects are the *Fiqh al-'ayyān fi ḥaqā'iq al-Qur'ān*, which deals with the reality of natural phenomena but also with jinns, *hadīth*, the role of the scholars and their duties, Qur'ānic exegesis, etc.,<sup>92</sup> the *al-Jur'a al-Ṣāfiyya wa-l-naḥḥa al-kāfiyya*, which covers Sufism, ethics, jurisprudence, the characteristics of evil scholars,

---

Yahya Ould el-Bara, "The Life of Shaykh Sidi Al-Mukhtar Al-Kunti," in *The Meanings of Timbuktu*, 193–211; Mahmane Mahmoudou, "The Works of Shaykh Sidi Al-Mukhtar Al-Kunti," in *The Meanings of Timbuktu*, 213–229; and Abdel Wadoud Ould Cheikh, "A Man of Letters in Timbuktu: Al-Shaykh Sidi Muhammad Al-Kunti," in *The Meanings of Timbuktu*, 231–247.

<sup>86</sup> Muḥammad al-Mukhtār b. Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr al-Kuntī al-Wāfī (*ALA IV*, 98–115); see also Abdallah Ould Daddah, "Ṣayh Sīdi Muhammed Wuld Sīd al-Muḥtar Al-Kuntī (1183H/1769-70-2 Ṣawwāl 1241/12 Mars 1826. Contribution à l'histoire politique et religieuse de Bilād Ṣinḡīt et des régions voisines, notamment d'après les sources arabes inédites" (unpublished PhD dissertation, Université de Paris – Sorbonne, 1977).

<sup>87</sup> Al-Mukhtār al-Ṣaghīr b. Muḥammad b. al-Mukhtār b. Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr al-Kuntī (*ALA IV*, 115–118); see also Boubacar Sissoko, "Le cheikh al-Muḥtār aṣ-Ṣaghīr al-Kuntī" (unpublished PhD dissertation, Université Lumière Lyon2, 2019).

<sup>88</sup> Aḥmad al-Bakkāy b. Muḥammad b. al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī (*ALA IV*, 118–134); see also Abdelkader Zebadia, "The Career and Correspondence of Ahmad al-Bakkay of Timbuktu, from 1847 to 1866" (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of London, 1974).

<sup>89</sup> The Qādiriyya was an older Sufi *ṭarīqa* whose origins can be traced back to the twelve-century scholar of Baghdād 'Abd al-Qādir al-Jilānī (d. 1166) but immediately spread in North Africa thanks to the efforts of the Andalusian scholar Abū Madyan (d. 1198), who met al-Jilānī during the Pilgrimage.

<sup>90</sup> KhḤ 92, 412, 1429, 2514, 11452; see *ALA IV* 79, item 35.

<sup>91</sup> Mahmoudou, "The Works of Shaykh Sidi Al-Mukhtar Al-Kunti," 223.

<sup>92</sup> KhḤ 1693; see *ALA IV*, 75, item 12.



the Dajjāl, and other topics;<sup>93</sup> and a series of replies titled *Ajwibat al-muhimma li-man lahu bi-amr nānihi himma* devoted to Qur'anic commentary, *ḥadīth*, jurisprudence, and Sufism.<sup>94</sup>

Many of these works display al-Mukhtār al-Kabīr's concern with *taṣawwuf* (Sufism), a topic to which the Kunta scholar contributed substantially. His famous *al-Kawkab al-waqqād fī faḍl dhikr al-mashā'ikh wa-ḥaqā'iq al-awrād*, which comprises an explanation of the Kunta *wird*, as well as other issues related to Sufism.<sup>95</sup> Often attached to *al-Kawkab*, the *al-Tadhyyil al-jalīl al-'ādīm li-l-mathīl* covers similar topics.<sup>96</sup> Another major work on *taṣawwuf* is the *Naf' al-Ṭīb fī al-ṣalāt 'alā al-nabī al-ḥabīb*, a devotional text containing several salutation for the Prophet.<sup>97</sup> Shorter texts on the topic, namely several *du'ā* (supplicatory prayers) and *dhikr* (formulas for the remembrance of God) ascribed to al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī, are present in both libraries.<sup>98</sup>

Another important works by the forefather of the Kunta is the *al-Nuḍār al-dhahab fī kull fann muntakhab*, a long treatise that substantially sketches the author's position regarding the issue of *tajdīd*, or renewal of the faith, and in which he explicitly claims to be the *mujaddid* (or renewer) for his age.<sup>99</sup> In addition, al-Mukhtār al-Kabīr is author of two works on *tafsīr* (Qur'anic exegesis): one on the first *sūra* of the Qur'ān, known as the *Kashf al-niqāb 'an asrār Fāṭihat al-Kitāb*<sup>100</sup> and the *Latā'if al-quḍsī fī faḍāil āyāt al-kursī* on the Throne Verse.<sup>101</sup> As for the field of jurisprudence (*fiqh*), the BNRM hosts two incomplete copies of the *Hidāyat al-ṭullāb*,<sup>102</sup> while the KhḤ has a manuscript of the author's own commentary titled *Fath al-Wahhāb 'alā hidāyat al-ṭullāb*.<sup>103</sup>

<sup>93</sup> BNRM/D.360, ff. 1–120 (cat.1/125 & cat.1bis/125); KhḤ 11726, 13895; ALA IV, 76–77, item 20.

<sup>94</sup> BNRM/D.226 (cat. 1/99 & cat.1bis/99); BNRM/D.270, ff. 195–335 (cat. 1/514-3 & cat.1bis/514); BNRM/D.1429, ff. 1a-57b (cat.3/1335); see ALA IV, 73, item 4.

<sup>95</sup> BNRM/D. 1661, ff. 10–161 (cat.2/1290); KhḤ 828, 1011, 1124, 6099, 8328, 9942, 12514, 12197, 13740; see ALA IV, 77, item 23.

<sup>96</sup> KhḤ 1736; see ALA IV, 91, item 52.

<sup>97</sup> BNRM/D.127, ff. 1–70 (cat.1/106 & cat.1bis/106); BNRM/D.2257, ff 542–613 (cat. 5/4575); KhḤ 1053, 8493, 8827, 12580; see ALA IV 78, item 31.

<sup>98</sup> BNRM/D.266, ff. 106–107 (cat.1/5 & cat. 1bis/512–9); BNRM/D.266, 107–108 (cat.1/6 & cat. 1bis/512–10); BNRM/D.1754 (cat. 5/4574); KhḤ 1053, 11958. KhḤ 1130, 1355, 12467.

<sup>99</sup> KhḤ 11799, 12197.; see ALA IV, 79, item 36. For a detailed study of the *tajdīd* tradition, see John O. Hunwick, "Ignaz Goldziher on al-Suyūṭī," *The Muslim World* 67–2 (1978), 85–86; and Ella Landau-Tasseron, "The 'Cyclical Reform': A Study of the Mujaddid Tradition," *Studia Islamica* 70 (1989), 79–117.

<sup>100</sup> BNRM/D.343 (cat.1/7 & cat.1bis/7); see ALA IV, 77, item 22.

<sup>101</sup> KhḤ 5493; see ALA IV 78, item 26.

<sup>102</sup> BNRM/D.372 (cat.2/1631); BNRM/D.391 (cat. 1bis/231); ALA IV, 76, item 13.

<sup>103</sup> KhḤ 13966; see ALA IV (*Fath al-Wahhāb fī bayān alfāz hidāyat al-ṭullāb*), 75, item 11.

In regard to Arabic grammar, the Kunta *shaykh* authored the *Fath al-Wadūd bi-sharḥ al-maqṣūr wa-l-mamdūd*, which is a commentary of a poem by Ibn Mālik called *Tuhfat al-mawdūd fi al-maqṣūr wa-l-mamdūd* (d. 1274).<sup>104</sup> Lastly, a sermon (*khuṭba*)<sup>105</sup> is also ascribed to al-Mukhtār al-Kabīr.

All of these works are in prose, but al-Mukhtār al-Kabīr also wrote in verses: a poem on *tawḥīd* in rhyme *nūn*,<sup>106</sup> one in rhyme in *rā'* in praise of Ibn 'Arabī;<sup>107</sup> a versification (*manzūma*), on *istighātha*, or the practice of beseeching the help of Prophets and *awliyā'*;<sup>108</sup> and a commentary (*sharḥ*) on the author's own *Qaṣīda al-fayḍiyya*.<sup>109</sup>

Some works held in the KhḤ and the BNRM are wrongly attributed to al-Mukhtār al-Kabīr, while in fact their author is Muḥammad al-Kuntī, namely a copy of the *Fawā'id al-nūrāniyya wa-fawā'id sirriyya raḥmāniyya tashraḥu min mabānī al-ism al-aḥam mā inbaham* on esoteric sciences;<sup>110</sup> and multiple copies of *Rawḍ al-khaṣīb*, in turn a commentary (*sharḥ*) on his father's above-mentioned *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*.<sup>111</sup> Other works from Muḥammad al-Kuntī represented in the KhḤ and the BNRM mostly focus on Sufism and esoteric sciences. First and foremost, several copies of the monumental *al-Ṭarā'if wa-l-Ṭalā'id min karāmāt al-shaykhayn al-wālid wa-l-wālid*, a history of the Kunta and a biography of al-Mukhtār al-Kabīr that is in fact a work proving the status of the author's family as head of the Qādiriyya in West Africa.<sup>112</sup> More works in this field are a copy of the *al-Futūḥāt al-laduniyya al-shar'iyya fi sharḥ al-taṣliyya al-Nāṣiriyya al-dar'iyya*;<sup>113</sup> an injunction to piety (*was'iyya bitaqwā*);<sup>114</sup> multiple manuscripts of the *Jannat al-murīd dūn al-marīd* on Sufism;<sup>115</sup> a series of notes on talismans listed as *Taqyīd fi al-asmā' manqūl min al-ta'rif*;<sup>116</sup> and a treatise on the greatest name of God titled *Risāla fi ism*

<sup>104</sup> KhḤ 1956, 3278, 11415, 12192; see ALA IV, 75, item 10 (*Fath al-Wadūd bi-sharḥ Tuhfat al-mawdūd*).

<sup>105</sup> KhḤ 13732.

<sup>106</sup> KhḤ 12274.

<sup>107</sup> KhḤ 11998.

<sup>108</sup> KhḤ 14059.

<sup>109</sup> KhḤ 7357.

<sup>110</sup> BNRM/D.209, ff. 196-222 (cat. 1/509-3); see ALA IV, 97, item 14; for a detailed analysis of this work, see Ariela Marcus-Sells, "Science, Sorcery, and Secrets in the *Fawā'id Nūrāniyya* of Sidi Muḥammad Al-Kuntī," *History of Religions* 58-4 (2019), 432-464.

<sup>111</sup> BNRM/D.730 (cat. 2/1240); KhḤ, 4636, 7488, 11796, 12283; see ALA IV, 105, item 39. On al-Mukhtār al-Kabīr's *Nafḥ al-ṭīb*, see ALA IV, 78, item 31.

<sup>112</sup> KhḤ, 690, 1836, 4406; see ALA IV, 113, item 63.

<sup>113</sup> BNRM/D.1885-1, ff. 1-31 (cat. 5/4579); see ALA IV, 97, 16.

<sup>114</sup> BNRM/D.2254-8, ff. 130-136 (cat.4/3501); ALA IV, 113, 66/i.

<sup>115</sup> BNRM/D.1038, ff. 1-168 (cat. 2/1063); KhḤ, 610, 3431; see ALA IV, 98, item 23.

<sup>116</sup> BNRM/D.2254-10 ff. 140-143 (cat. 5/4434); see ALA IV, 113, item 62 (*Taqyīd fi al-asmā' wa-l-ḥurūf*).

*Allāh al-a'zam*.<sup>117</sup> Of particular relevance is another of Muḥammad al-Kuntī's work, which pertains to a different genre: the *Awthaq 'urā al-i'tisām li-l-umarā'* *wa-l-wuzarā wal-l-ḥukkām*, a "mirror for princes," written to Aḥmad Lobbo (d. 1845), the founding ruler of the Caliphate of Ḥamdallāhi (1818–1862).<sup>118</sup>

More widely represented in the KhḤ and the BNRM is Aḥmad al-Bakkāy, whose exquisite mastery of classical Arabic is expressed, for example, in several poems such as *Qaṣīda* in praise of the Prophet;<sup>119</sup> and another *Qaṣīda* in praise of the 'Alawī Moroccan ruler Muḥammad b. 'Abd al-Raḥmān (d. 1876).<sup>120</sup> Aḥmad al-Bakkāy also wrote several letters, the majority of which deal with inter-*ṭuruq* quarrels. Indeed, one of the major historical developments in West Africa in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries is the spread, in chronological order, of two major Sufi brotherhoods, the above-mentioned Qādiriyya in its reformed version propagated by the Kunta and the Tijāniyya.<sup>121</sup> Initiated by the North African scholar Aḥmad al-Tijānī (d. 1815), the Tijāniyya spread south of the Sahara with the movement led by *al-ḥājj* 'Umar Tall (d. 1864).<sup>122</sup>

*Al-ḥājj* 'Umar Tall's two major works on the Tijāniyya are represented in the KhḤ and the BNRM. His 1837 *Suyūf al-sa'īd al-mu'taqid fi ahl Allāh ka-l-*

<sup>117</sup> BNRM/D.200-18, ff. 481–523 (cat. 5/4435); KhH 12316, 12433; not listed in ALA IV.

<sup>118</sup> BNRM/D.1855-3, ff. 73–137 (cat. 5/4040); see ALA IV, 95–6, item 8. Aḥmad B. Muḥammad Būbū b. Abī Bakr b. Sa'īd al-Fullānī (ALA IV, 208-211). On Aḥmad Lobbo, see Mauro Nobili, *Sultan, Caliph, and Renewer of the Faith: Aḥmad Lobbo, the Tārīkh al-fatāsh and the Making of an Islamic State in Nineteenth-Century West Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>119</sup> BNRM/D.492, ff. 168–172 (cat.1/83–5 & cat.1bis/83–5); KhH 1130; see ALA IV, 121, item 14/vi.

<sup>120</sup> KhH, 2114, 11999, 13685; see ALA IV, 121, item 14/i.

<sup>121</sup> For a comprehensive overview of the role of Sufi brotherhoods in West African history, see Mauro Nobili, "Muslim Brotherhoods in West African history," Oxford Research Encyclopedia, 2021, <https://oxfordre.com/africanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.001.0001/acrefore-9780190277734-e-171?rskey=j5kbRC&result=2>.

<sup>122</sup> 'Umar b. Sa'īd b. al-Mukhtār b. 'Alī b. al-Mukhtār al-Fūtī al-Ṭūrī al-Gidiwī al-Tijānī (ALA IV, 214–222); see also David Robinson, *The Holy War of Umar Tal: The Western Sudan in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985); Madina Ly-Tall, *Un Islam militant en Afrique de l'ouest aux XIX siècle: La Tijaniyya de Saïku Umar Futiyu contre les pouvoirs traditionnels et la puissance coloniale* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1991); Amir Syed, "Al-Ḥājj 'Umar Tāl and the Realm of the Written: Mastery, Mobility and Islamic Authority in 19th Century West Africa" (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Michigan, 2016), 17–18. On the Tijāniyya, see Jamil M. Abun-Nasr, *The Tijaniyya: A Sufi Order in the Modern World* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965); Jean-Louis Triaud and David Robinson (eds.), *La Tijāniyya: une confrérie musulmane à la conquête de l'Afrique* (Paris: Karthala, 2005); and Zachary V. Wright, *Realizing Islam: The Tijaniyya in North Africa and the Eighteenth-Century Muslim World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020).

*Tijānī ‘alā raqabat al-ṭarīd al-jānī* is an early attempt to present the major tenets of the Tijāniyya, in a work that is crafted as a defense of the *awliyā*’ against the detractors of Sufism.<sup>123</sup> The arguments of the *Suyūf al-sa’id* are then reshaped and expanded in *Al-ḥājj ‘Umar Tall*’s most influential work, the *Rīmāḥ ḥizb al-Raḥīm ‘alā nuḥūr ḥizb al-raḥīm*.<sup>124</sup> Composed in 1845–1846, this lengthy work, comprising 55 chapters, represents one of the most comprehensive exposition of the Tijānī doctrine to date.

The spread of the new brotherhood did not go, however, uncontested. Especially, in the Middle Niger, the Tijāniyya generated strong polemics from the followers of the Qādiriyya. Adamant opponents to the Tijānī expansion were the Kunta. In particular, Aḥmad al-Bakkāy, the spiritual leader of the Qādirī order since 1847, became the center of a series of polemical writings that connected West Africa to Morocco during the mid-1850s. He composed the *Risāla ilā ahl Marrakush*, a letter to the Qādirī notables of Marrakesh, held by the BNRM, in which he denounces some of the Tijānī practices.<sup>125</sup> However, the bulk of the exchanges with Morocco was between Aḥmad al-Bakkāy and Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad Akansūs (d. 1877), a Moroccan notable and leading Tijānī figure who was very close to the ‘Alawī dynasty.<sup>126</sup> In particular, the KhH and the BNRM have copies of the most important correspondence between the two, i.e., two long letters normally referred to as *al-Jawāb al-muskit* from Akansūs, which is a reply to an earlier letter from Aḥmad al-Bakkāy and the latter’s *Fath al-Quddūs fi radd ‘alā al-Kansūs*.<sup>127</sup>

No traces exist in the KhH and the BNRM of the later phase of the dispute between the followers of the Qādiriyya and the Tijāniyya that took place in West Africa, with the exception of some poems. The first, a *Qaṣīda nūniyya fi radd ba’ḍ ahl al-ṭā’ifa al-Tijāniyya*, was penned by Aḥmad al-Bakkāy, in rhyme *nūn*, against the Tijānī in West Africa,<sup>128</sup> the other two are poems in praise of Aḥmad al-Tijānī (d. 1815) by Yerkoy Talfi (d. c. 1862).<sup>129</sup> The latter was a Tijānī follower but also a notable of the Caliphate of Ḥamdallāhi who

<sup>123</sup> BNRM/D.2135-1, ff. 1–101 [cat. 4/3670] ALA IV, 220, item 177.

<sup>124</sup> BNRM/D.1150 [cat. 2/1090] ALA IV, 218–9, item 12.

<sup>125</sup> BNRM.D/206 (cat. 1/395 & cat 1bis/395); BNRM.D/1071bis (cat. 3/2196); see ALA IV, 128, item 16/v (*R. ilā ikhwāninā wa-aḥbābinā wa-talāmīdhinā al-Marrākishiyyin*).

<sup>126</sup> Gannūn, *al-Nubūgh al-maghribi*, 388–389.

<sup>127</sup> BNRM/D.1071, ff. 1–28 (cat. 3/1086); BNRM/D.2135, ff. 174–204 (cat. 5/4611–3); KhH, 1620; KhH 13912; see ALA IV 120, item 6.

<sup>128</sup> KhH, 14116; see ALA IV, 122, 14/ix.

<sup>129</sup> BNRM/D.1071, f. 34 (cat.3/1130); see ALA IV, 235, item 6/xvii. On al-Mukhtār b. Wadī’at Allāh al-Māsini, see ALA IV, 233–236; and H. Ali Diakite, “Al-Mukhtār b. Yerkoy Talfi et le Califat de Hamdallahi au XIXe siècle: Édition critique et traduction de Tabkīt Al-Bakkay. À propos d’une controverse inter-confrérique entre al-Mukhtār b. Yerkoy Talfi [1800–1864] et Aḥmad Al-Bakkay (1800–1866)” [unpublished PhD dissertation, École Normale Supérieure de Lyon, 2015].

participated to the final confrontation in the Middle Niger between Qādirī and Tijānī. He was the author of a famous polemical work against Aḥmad al-Bakkāy titled the *Tabkiyat al-Bakkāy*, which is not available in the libraries in which I conducted research.<sup>130</sup>

The Qādiriyya-Tijāniyya debate witnesses the emergence of the corporate identity of the *turuq* that will then play a big role in the history of West Africa. Citing Louis Brenner, it was with the efforts of the Kunta and of *al-ḥājj* ‘Umar Tall, that “the *turuq* [in West Africa] began increasingly to emphasize their distinctive identities and corporateness; concurrently, they became public institutions.”<sup>131</sup> In other words, it is with the emergence of the reformed Qādiriyya propagated by the Kunta and of the Tijāniyy that the phenomenon of *turuq* became consolidated in West Africa, where priorly Sufism existed outside the structure of the brotherhoods.<sup>132</sup>

### *Other Fulānī Scholars*

Apart from the abovementioned writings by *al-ḥājj* ‘Umar Tall, a number of works of other Fulani scholars from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are also widely represented in the KhḤ and the BNRM. A common denominator of the experience of these Fulani scholars is their mobility across the continent, from the regions south of the Sahara into North Africa and the Middle East.

The oldest in chronological order is Muḥammad al-Kashnāwī (d. 1741).<sup>133</sup> Originally from Katsina, Northern Nigeria, Muḥammad al-Kashnāwī completed the Pilgrimage and then settled in Cairo, where he became a prominent scholar of al-Azhar, particularly known for his knowledge of esoteric sciences. On this topic, he wrote his famous *Bahjat al-āfāq*

<sup>130</sup> ALA IV, 235-236, item 8. On this work, see Said Bousbina, “Tabkiyat al-Bakkay. Une lettre ‘lacrymogène’ de Yerkoï Talki à Ahmad al-Bakkay. Le plaidoyer d’un défenseur de la Tijaniyya,” in Goerg, Odile and Pondopoulo, Anna (eds.), *Islam et sociétés en Afrique subsaharienne à l’épreuve de l’histoire: un parcours en compagnie de Jean-Louis Triaud* (Paris: Karthala, 2012), 101–114.

<sup>131</sup> Louis Brenner, “Concepts of *Ṭariqa* in West Africa: The Case of the Qādiriyya,” in Cruise O’Brien, Donald B. and Coulon, Christian (eds.), *Charisma and Brotherhood in African Islam* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 35.

<sup>132</sup> In contrast with Brenner, Marcus-Sells argues that the Qādiriyya, prior to the spread of Tijāniyya, never developed “an institutional, corporate identity” (Ariela Marcus-Sells, *Sorcery or Science? Contesting Knowledge and Practice in West African Sufi Texts* (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, forthcoming), 10–11. I thank Ariela Marcus-Sells for sharing with me the proofs of her book).

<sup>133</sup> Muḥammad b. Muḥammad al-Fullānī al-Kashnāwī al-Dānrankāwī al-Sūdānī (ALA II, 37–39). See Dahlia E. M. Gubara, “Muḥammad Al-Kashnāwī and the Everyday Life of the Occult,” in Kane, Ousmane O. (ed.), *Islamic Scholarship in Africa: New Directions and Global Contexts* (Suffolk, UK: James Currey, 2021), 41–60.

*wa-īdāh al-hubs wa-l-ighlāq fī 'ilm al-ḥarūf wa-l-awfāq*, completed in 1733, available in the KhḤ and the BNRM.<sup>134</sup>

Another Fulani scholar whose works are preserved in KhḤ is Ṣāliḥ al-Fulānī (d. 1803).<sup>135</sup> Peripatetic scholar, Ṣāliḥ al-Fulānī left his native Fouta Djallon to study in Mauritania, Bakhounou, Tamgrūt, Tunis, and Cairo, before settling in Medina in the early 1770s. During his trips he had several teachers, including the celebrated Murtaḍā al-Zabīdī (d. 1790), and his *isnāds* are listed and discussed in his *Qatf al-thamar fī raf' asānīd al-muṣannaḥāt fī al-funūn wa-l-athār*.<sup>136</sup> He also had numerous students, such as the prominent Mauritanian Tijānī scholar Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ (d. 1829) who was responsible for the early spread of the Tijāniyya from North Africa in Mauritania.<sup>137</sup>

The most represented author among Fulan in the KhḤ and the BNRM is Aḥmad al-Timbuktāwī (*fl.* 1814).<sup>138</sup> Originally from Fouta Jallon but trained in Djenne, and then resident of Timbuktu, Aḥmad al-Timbuktāwī is known for his works denouncing the religious practices of the “blacks” in Morocco and Tunisia and accusing the local rulers of not opposing such practices.<sup>139</sup> Three works on this topics are available in the KhḤ: the *Hatk al-sitr 'ammā 'alayhi sūdān Tūnis min al-kufr*;<sup>140</sup> a *Risāla fī al-radd 'alā ba'ḍ al-bida' al-fāsida*;<sup>141</sup> and the *Shikāyat al-dīn al-Muḥammadi ilā ri'āyat al-muwakkalīn bi-hi*.<sup>142</sup> He also

<sup>134</sup> BNRM/D.1628 (cat. 3/2616); KhḤ 299; KhḤ 731; KhḤ 3055; KhḤ 3809; KhḤ 4576; on the *Bahjat al-āfāq*, see ALA II, 38, item 1.

<sup>135</sup> Ṣāliḥ b. Muḥammad b. Nūḥ b. 'Abd Allāh b. 'Umar al-Fullānī al-'Umarī al-Masūfī (ALA IV, 504–507).

<sup>136</sup> KhḤ 1118; KhḤ 11907; KhḤ 18398; on the *Qatf al-thamar*, see ALA IV, 506, item 5.

<sup>137</sup> Muḥammad al-Ḥāfiẓ b. al-Mukhtār b. al-Ḥabīb al-'Alawī ash-Shinqīṭī (ALA V, 217–218).

<sup>138</sup> Aḥmad b. Abī Bakr b. Yūsuf b. Ibrāhīm al-Fūtī al-Dūjaqī al-Timbuktāwī al-Jinnāwī (ALA IV, 50).

<sup>139</sup> On this topic, see Ismael M. Montana, “The Trans-Saharan Slave Trade, Abolition of Slavery and Transformations in the North African Regency of Tunus, 1759–1846” (unpublished PhD dissertation, York University, 2007); Ismael M. Montana, “Aḥmad Ibn al-Qadī al-Timbuktawī on the Bori Ceremonies of Sudan-Tunis,” in Lovejoy, Paul E. (ed.), *Slavery on the Frontiers of Islam* (New Jersey: Marcus Weiner Publishers, 2004): 173–198; Ismael M. Montana, “Bori Colonies in Tunis,” in Montana, Ismael M., Lovejoy, Paul E. and M. Asl, Behnaz (eds.), *Islam, Slavery and Diaspora* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press), 2009, 155–167; Ismael M. Montana, “Bori Practice Among Enslaved West Africans of Ottoman Tunis: Unbelief (*Kufi*) or Another Dimension of the African diaspora?” *The History of the Family* 16–2 (2011): 152–159.

<sup>140</sup> KhḤ 6832, on which see ALA IV, 50, item 1.

<sup>141</sup> KhḤ 6833, on which see ALA IV, 50, item 2.

<sup>142</sup> KhḤ 6833, on which see ALA IV, 50, item 4.

authored another work, titled *Marāt al-hind li-af'āl al-hājj wa-l-'umra li-l-'abd*.<sup>143</sup>

The last Fulānī scholar whose works are preserved in the KhḤ and BNRM is Alfā Hāshim (d. 1931), the nephew of *al-hājj* 'Umar Tall.<sup>144</sup> Born in mid-1860s, Alfā Hāshim was among the members of the 'Umarian family who fled Segou at the time of the French conquest of the Middle Niger and moved to Sokoto where he participated in the local resistance against the British invasion. With the final defeat of Sokoto in 1903, he fled again, refusing to live under colonial rule and resettled in Mecca first and then Medina, where he became a scholar of fame. Of his works, the KhḤ preserves a work on jurisprudence, listed as *Ajwiba fiḥiyya*,<sup>145</sup> two works of the Prophet, the *Fath al-mughīt fita 'rīfbi-ba'd 'ulūm al-ḥadīth*,<sup>146</sup> and a *Faṣl fi ṣiffat 'Ibādatihi 'alaysi al-ṣalāt wa-l-salām*.<sup>147</sup>

## Conclusion

This preliminary and unsystematic survey of only two of the many Moroccan manuscript libraries have revealed the potential of these repositories for scholars interested in the history of Muslim societies in West Africa. The KhḤ and the BNRM, however, do represent an exception and the many other libraries in Morocco presented by Benjelloun-Laroui, Binebine, Jocelyn Hendrickson, and Sabahat Adil most likely hold manuscripts that are similarly relevant for the history of West Africa. Furthermore, some materials might still circulate in local Moroccan markets.<sup>148</sup> In addition, libraries in Morocco potentially hold manuscripts that come from West Africa but were not authored by West African scholars.<sup>149</sup>

<sup>143</sup> KhḤ 6834, on which see *ALA* IV, 50, item 3 (listed as *Ṣar'āt al-hind li-af'āl al-hājj wa-l-'umra li-l-'abd*).

<sup>144</sup> Muḥammad al-Hāshimī b. Aḥmad b. Sa'īd (*ALA* IV, 223–225).

<sup>145</sup> KhḤ 11963, not listed in *ALA* IV.

<sup>146</sup> KhḤ 11850; KhḤ 13783; the *Fath al-mughīt* is not listed in *ALA* IV.

<sup>147</sup> KhḤ 11963, not listed in *ALA* IV.

<sup>148</sup> For instance, in Rabat, Hunwick purchased in 1990 (from an undisclosed source) a manuscript, now held in the Herskovits Library at Northwestern University, of a work on treatise composed by Aḥmad Bābā, the *Ghāyat al-'amal fi taḥḍīl al-niyya 'alā al-'amal*—a manuscript copy produced by a student while the author dictated it to him (Northwestern University, Melville J. Herskovits Library, Kano Collection 541, <https://waamd.lib.berkeley.edu/udes/21283?query=%D8%BA%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A9%20%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B9%D9%85%D9%84&page=0>).

<sup>149</sup> Two examples of this type of manuscripts were discovered by Hunwick in the BNRM. The first is a manuscript of the famous work of jurisprudence by Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī (d. 996), the *Risāla*, which was copied for the king of the Songhay Empire Askīya Muḥammad Bānī (r. 1596–1588) (John O. Hunwick, “West African Arabic Manuscript Colophons: I: Askīya Muḥammad Bānī’s Copy of the *Risāla* of Ibn Abī Zayd,” *Sudanic Africa* 13 [2002], 123–130). This manuscript represents a rare

All this evidence points to Moroccan libraries as important yet still underexplored resources for the history of Africa south of the Sahara. Likewise, other North African countries seem to present scholars with similar opportunities. Ismael Montana's research on Aḥmad al-Timbuktāwī, for example, demonstrates that Tunisia is home of important documents for West African history.<sup>150</sup> The PhD dissertation of Abdulkader Zebadia on Aḥmad al-Bakkāy suggests that Algerian libraries hold very important manuscripts on the history of the Kunta.<sup>151</sup> The work of Terence Walz and Hadrien Collet opens new windows on the history of West Africa from Egypt.<sup>152</sup>

This large corpus of primary sources for the history of Africa south of the Sahara in North African libraries points to two major shortcomings of the Area Studies paradigm. On a superficial level, the decapitation of the continent results in West Africa and North Africa being treated as separate and different domains. Consequently, sources that might not be available, for instance, in Mali but are held in libraries in Morocco, will remain inaccessible or unknown to scholars of West African history. On a deeper level, the very presence of these manuscripts in North Africa is a testimony of a long, shared history between the peoples living on the Mediterranean shores of the continent, those in the Sahara, and those living south of the great desert. This shared history goes beyond common narratives of violence and slavery, as Ousmane O. Kane points out in his description of the "microcosm" of Medina Kaolack in Senegal.<sup>153</sup> In sum, it is time to put to rest the old fictional divide between North Africa and Africa south of the Sahara.

---

specimen of written material from the court of the Songhay that most likely reached Morocco after the looting of the capital city Gao in 1591. Slightly earlier are several volumes of the Arabic dictionary *al-Muḥkam fī al-luġha* by Ibn Sida (d. 1066), held by the BNRM and the library of the Qarawiyyin mosque of Fès that were copied in Timbuktu and whose colophons provide a vivid picture of the activities of copyists and vocalizers in the city during the 1570s (John O. Hunwick, "West African Arabic Manuscript Colophons: II: A Sixteenth-Century Timbuktu Copy of the *Muḥkam* of Ibn Sida," *Sudanic Africa* 13 [2002], 131–152).

<sup>150</sup> Montana, "The trans-Saharan slave trade"; Montana, "Ahmad Ibn al-Qadi al-Timbuktawī"; Montana, "Bori Colonies in Tunis"; Montana, "Bori practice."

<sup>151</sup> Zebadia, "The Career and Correspondence of Ahmad Al-Bakkay."

<sup>152</sup> Terence Walz, "The Paper Trade of Egypt and the Sudan in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries and Its Re-Export to the Bilād as-Sūdān," in *The Trans-Saharan Book Trade*, 74–107; Hadrien Collet, "Échos d'Arabie. Le Pèlerinage à La Mecque de Mansa Musa (724–725/1324–1325) d'après des nouvelles sources," *History in Africa* 46 (2019a), 105–35; and Hadrien Collet, "Royal Pilgrims from Takrūr According to 'Abd Al-Qādir al-Jazīrī (12th–16th Century)," *Islamic Africa* 10–1–2 (2019b), 181–203.

<sup>153</sup> Ousmane O. Kane, *Beyond Timbuktu: An Intellectual History of Muslim West Africa* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), 5.



## Acknowledgements

During my archival work in Morocco, I was kindly hosted by Amir Syed (University of Pittsburgh), to which I extend my thanks. I also owe immense gratitude to Adrien Delmas (Centre Jacques-Berque), Said Bousbina (independent scholar), Ahmed Chokri (University Mohamed V – Rabat), Rahal Boubrik (Université Mohamed V), and especially Khaled Zahri (then Bibliothèque Royale Hasaniyya, currently Université Abdelmalek Essaadi) who facilitated immensely the work in the Moroccan libraries.

## References

- Abitbol, Michel, *Tombouctou et les Arma: de la conquête Marocaine du Soudan Nigérien en 1591 à l'hégémonie de l'empire Peulh du Macina en 1833* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1979).
- Abun-Nasr, Jamil M., *The Tijaniyya: A Sufi Order in the Modern World* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965).
- Allman, Jean M., “#HerskovitsMustFall? A Meditation on Whiteness, African Studies, and the Unfinished Business of 1968,” *African Studies Review* 62–3 (2019), 6–39.
- ‘Allūsh, Y. S., and ‘Abd Allāh al-Rajrājī, *Fihris al-makhṭū‘āt al-‘arabiyya al-mahfūza fi al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma bi-l-Ribāt: al-qism al-thānī* (1921–1953), 2 vols. [al-Dār al-Bayḍā’ [Casablanca]: al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma li-l-Kutub wa-al-Wathā’iq, 2001.
- , *Fihris al-makhṭū‘āt al-‘arabiyya al-mahfūza fi al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma bi-al-Ribāt: al-qism al-thālith* (1954–1957) (Rabāt: Wizārat al-Awqāf wa-al-Shu‘ūn al-Islāmīya wa-al-Thaqāfiya, 1973).
- Al-Tādilī (al-), Ṣāliḥ, and Sa‘īd al-Murābiṭī, *Fihris al-makhṭū‘āt al-‘arabiyya al-mahfūza fi al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma bi-l-Ribāt: al-mujallad al-awwal* (al-Dār al-Bayḍā’ [Casablanca]: Maṭba‘at al-najāḥ al-jadīda, 1997–1998).
- Baldwin, T. H., fi *The Obligations of Princes: An Essay on Moslem Kingship by Sheikh Mohammed al-Maghūli of Tlemsen* (Beirut: Imprimerie Catholique, 1932).
- Bara (el-), Yahya Ould, “The Life of Shaykh Sidi Al-Mukhtar Al-Kunti,” in Jeppie, Shamil and Diagne, Souleymane B. (eds.), *The Meanings of Timbuktu*, 193–211.
- Batran, Aziz A., “Sidi al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī and the Recrudescence of Islam in the Western Sahara and the Middle Niger, c. 1750–1811,” PhD dissertation, University of Birmingham (Birmingham, 1971).
- , “The Kunta, Sidi al-Mukhtār al-Kuntī, and the Office of Shaykh al-Ṭarīqa ‘l-Qādiriyya,” in Willis, John R. (ed.), *Studies in West African Islamic History. Volume 1: The Cultivator of Islam* (London: Frank Cass, 1976): 114–146.
- , *The Qādiriyya Brotherhood in West Africa and the Western Sahara: The Life and Times of Shaykh Al-Mukhtar Al-Kunti, 1729–1811* (Institut des Etudes Africaines, Rabat, 2001).
- , *Tobacco Smoking Under Islamic Law: Controversy Over its Introduction* (Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 2003).
- Bedri, K. I., and P. E. Starratt, “*Tāj al-dīn fi mā yajib ‘alā al-mulūk*, or ‘The Crown of Religion concerning the obligations of the princes,’” *Kano Studies* N.S. 1–2 (1974–1977), 15–28.
- Benjelloun-Laroui, Latifa, *Les bibliothèques au Maroc* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1990).

- Berzock, Kathleen B. (ed.), *Caravans of Gold, Fragments in Time: Art, Culture, and Exchange Across Medieval Saharan Africa* (Princeton: Princeton University Press and the Block Museum of Arts, Northwestern University, 2019).
- Binbīn, Aḥmad Shauqī (Binebine, Ahmed-Chouqui), and ‘Umar ‘Ammūr (Omar Ammor), *Kashshāf al-kutub al-makhtūṭa bi-l-Khizāna al-Ḥasaniyya / Index général des manuscrits arabes de la Bibliothèque Royale (Hassania)* (al-Ribāt: al-Khizāna al-Ḥasaniyya, 2007).
- Binebine, Ahmed-Chouqui, *Histoire des bibliothèques au Maroc* (Rabat: Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines, 1992).
- Bousbina, Said, “Tabkiyat al-Bakkay. Une lettre ‘lacrymogène’ de Yerkoy Talki à Ahmad al-Bakkay. Le plaidoyer d’un défenseur de la Tijaniyya,” in Goerg, Odile and Pondopoulo, Anna (eds.), *Islam et sociétés en Afrique subsaharienne à l’épreuve de l’histoire: un parcours en compagnie de Jean-Louis Triaud* (Paris: Karthala, 2012), 101–114.
- Bovill, Edward W., *The Golden Trade of the Moors* (London - New York: Oxford University Press, 1968).
- Brenner, Louis, “Concepts of *Tariqa* in West Africa: The Case of the Qādiriyya,” in Cruise O’Brien, Donal B., and Coulon, Christian (eds.), *Charisma and Brotherhood in African Islam* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 33–52.
- Cherbonneau, M. A., “Essai sur la littérature arabe au Soudan d’après le Tekmilet ed-Dibadje d’Ahmed Baba le Tombouctien,” *Annales de la société archéologique de Constantine* 2 (1854–1855), 1–42.
- Christopher Fyfe, “The Emergence and Evolution of African Studies in the United Kingdom,” in Martin, William G., West, Michael O., and Wallerstein, Immanuel M. (eds.), *Out of One, Many Africas: Reconstructing the Study and Meaning of Africa* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 54–61.
- Collet, Hadrien, “Échos d’Arabie. Le Pèlerinage à La Mecque de Mansa Musa (724–725/1324–1325) d’après des nouvelles sources,” *History in Africa* 46 (2019), 105–135.
- , “Royal Pilgrims from Takrūr According to ‘Abd Al-Qādir al-Jazīrī (12th–16th Century),” *Islamic Africa* 10–1–2 (2019b), 181–203.
- Coquery-Vidrovitch, Catherine, “The Rise of Francophone African Social Science: From Colonial Knowledge to Knowledge of Africa,” in Martin, William G., West, Michael O. and Wallerstein, Immanuel M. (eds.), *Out of One, Many Africas: Reconstructing the Study and Meaning of Africa* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 39–53.
- Diakité, H. Ali, “Al-Mukhār b. Yerkoy Talfi et le Califat de Hamdallahi au XIXe siècle: Édition critique et traduction de Tabkīt Al-Bakkay. À propos d’une controverse inter-confrérique entre al-Mukhtār b. Yerkoy Talfi (1800–1864) et Aḥmad Al-Bakkay (1800–1866),” PhD dissertation, École Normale Supérieure de Lyon (Lyon, 2015).
- Fihris al-makhtūṭāt al-‘arabiyya al-mahfūza bi-l-Maktaba al-Waṭaniyya li-l-Mamlaka al-Maghribiyya: al-mujallad al-thāmin, majmū‘at Muḥammad b. al-Ḥasan al-Ḥajwī (raṣīd ḥarf al-Ḥā’)* (Rabat: Al-Maktaba al-Waṭaniyya li-l-Mamlaka al-Maghribiyya, 2009).
- Fihris al-makhtūṭāt al-‘arabiyya al-mahfūza bi-l-Maktaba al-Waṭaniyya li-l-Mamlaka al-Maghribiyya: al-mujallad al-tāsi’: Majmū‘at Muḥammad b. Ja’far al-Kattānī (raṣīd ḥarf Jim Kāf)* (Rabāt: Al-Maktaba al-Waṭaniyya li-l-Mamlaka al-Maghribiyya, 2011).
- Gannūn, ‘Abd Allāh, *Rasā’il Sa’adiyya* (Tiṭwān: Ma’had Mawlāya al-Ḥasan, 1954).
- , *al-Nubūgh al-maghribī fi al-adab al-‘arabī* (Beyrūt: Dār al-kutub al-‘ilmiyya, 1971).

- Gharbī (al-), Muḥammad, *Bidāyat al-ḥukm al-Maghribī fi al-Sūdān al-gharbī* (Baghdād: Dār al-Rashīd li-l-Nashr 1982).
- Green, Nile, "Rethinking the 'Middle East' after the Oceanic Turn," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 34–3 (2014), 556–564.
- Gubara, Dahlia E. M., "Revisiting Race and Slavery through 'Abd al-Rahman al-Jabarti's 'Aja'ib al-athar,'" *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 38–2 (2018), 230–245.
- , "Muḥammad Al-Kashnāwī and the Everyday Life of the Occult," in Kane, Ousmane O. (ed.), *Islamic Scholarship in Africa: New Directions and Global Contexts* (Suffolk, UK: James Currey, 2021), 41–60.
- Gwarzo, Hassan I., "The Life and Teachings of al-Maghīlī, with Particular Reference to the Saharan Jewish community," PhD Dissertation, University of London (London, 1972).
- Hall, Bruce S., and Charles C. Stewart, "The Historic 'Core Curriculum' and the Book Market in Islamic West Africa," in Krätli, Graziano and Lydon, Ghislaine (eds.), *The Trans-Saharan Book Trade: Manuscript Culture, Arabic Literacy, and Intellectual History in Muslim Africa* (Leiden: Brill 2011), 109–174.
- Hamel (El), Chouki, *Black Morocco: A History of Slavery, Race, and Islam* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
- Hatem, Mervat, "Pensée I: Why and How Should Middle East and African Studies Be Connected?" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 41–2 (2009), 189–192.
- Hendrickson, Jocelyn, "A Guide to Arabic Manuscript Libraries in Morocco, with Notes on Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, and Spain," *Middle Eastern Library Association Notes* 81 (2008), 15–88.
- Hendrickson, Jocelyn, and Sabahat Adil, "A Guide to Arabic Manuscript Libraries on Morocco: Further Developments," *Middle Eastern Library Association Notes* 86 (2013), 1–19.
- Houdas, Octave V., *Tarikh es-Soudan par Abderrahman ben Abdallah ben 'Imran ben 'Amir es-Sa'di*, 2 vols. (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1898–1900).
- Hunwick, John O., *Timbuktu and the Songhay Empire: al-Sa'dī's Ta rīkh al-Sūdān down to 1613, and other Contemporary Documents* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).
- , "Aḥmad Bābā and the Moroccan Invasion of the Sudan (1591)," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria* 2–3 (1962), 311–328.
- , "Ignaz Goldziher on al-Suyūṭī," *The Muslim World* 67–2 (1978), 79–99.
- , *Sharī'a in Songhay: The Replies of al-Maghīlī to the Questions of Askia Al-Ḥājj Muḥammad* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).
- , "West African Arabic Manuscript Colophons: I: Askiya Muḥammad Bānī's Copy of the *Risāla* of Ibn Abī Zayd," *Sudanic Africa* 13 (2002a), 123–130.
- , "West African Arabic Manuscript Colophons: II: A Sixteenth-Century Timbuktu Copy of the *Muḥkam* of Ibn Sīda," *Sudanic Africa* 13 (2002b), 131–152.
- , *Jews of a Saharan Oasis: Elimination of the Tamantit Community* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2006).
- Hunwick, John O., and Fatīma Harrak (eds. and trans.), *Mi'rāj al-Ṣu'ūd: Aḥmad Bābā's Replies on Slavery* (Rabat: Université Mohammed V, Publications de l'Institut des Etudes Africaines, 2000).
- Kane, Ousmane O., *Beyond Timbuktu: An Intellectual History of Muslim West Africa* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016).

- Kattānī (al-), Muḥammad I., and Šāliḥ al-Tādīlī, *Fihris al-makḥṭūṭāt al-‘arabiyya al-mahfūzaa fi al-Khizānaa al-‘Āmma bi-l-Ribāṭ* (al-Dār al-Bayḍā’ (Casablanca: al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma li-Kutub wa-al-Wathā’iq, 1997).
- Landau-Tasserou, Ella, “The ‘Cyclical Reform’: A Study of the Mujaddid Tradition,” *Studia Islamica* 70 (1989), 79–117.
- Lecocq, Baz, “Distant Shores: A Historiographic View on Trans-Saharan Space,” *Journal of African History* 56–1 (2015), 23–36.
- Lévi-Provençal, Évariste, *Les manuscrits arabes de Rabat* (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1921).
- Lewis, Martha W., and Kären Wigen, *The Myth of Continents: A Critique of Metageography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
- Lydon, Ghislaine, *On Trans-Saharan Trails: Islamic Law, Trade Networks, and Cross-Cultural Exchange in Nineteenth-Century Western Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).
- , “Saharan Oceans and Bridges, Barriers and Divides in Africa’s Historiographical Landscape,” *Journal of African History* 56–1 (2015), 3–22.
- Madina Ly-Tall, *Un Islam militant en Afrique de l’ouest aux XIX siècle: La Tijaniyya de Saïku Umar Futiyyu contre les pouvoirs traditionnels et la puissance coloniale* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1991).
- Mahmoudou, Mahmane, “The Works of Shaykh Sidi Al-Mukhtar Al-Kunti,” in Jeppie, Shamil and Diagne, Souleymane B. (eds.), *The Meanings of Timbuktu*, 213–229.
- Marcus-Sells, Ariela, “Science, Sorcery, and Secrets in the *Fawā’id Nūrāniyya* of Sidi Muḥammad Al-Kuntī,” *History of Religions* 58–4 (2019), 432–464.
- , “*The Kunta of the Sahara*,” Oxford University Bibliographies, 2018, <https://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195390155/obo-9780195390155-0248.xml?rskey=L2cD0U&result=1&q=marcus-sells%5C#firstMatch>.
- , *Sorcery or Science? Contesting Knowledge and Practice in West African Sufi Texts* (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 2022).
- McDougall, E. Ann, “Discourse and Distortion: Critical Reflections on Studying the Saharan Slave Trade,” *Revue d’histoire d’outre-Mers* 336–337 (2002), 195–227.
- , “Research in Saharan History,” *Journal of African History* 39–3 (1998), 467–480.
- , “The Economics of Islam in the Southern Sahara: The Rise of the Kunta Clan,” in Levzion, Nehemia and Fisher, Humphrey J. (eds.), *Rural and Urban Islam in West Africa* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1987), 39–54.
- McDougall, James, and Judith Scheele (eds.), *Saharan Frontiers: Space and Mobility in Northwest Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012).
- Montana, Ismael M., “Ahmad Ibn al-Qadi al-Timbuktawi on the Bori Ceremonies of Sudan-Tunis,” in Lovejoy, Paul E. (ed.), *Slavery on the Frontiers of Islam* (New Jersey: Marcus Weiner Publishers, 2004): 173–198.
- , “Bori Colonies in Tunis,” in Montana, Ismael M., Lovejoy, Paul E., and M. Asl, Behnaz (eds.), *Islam, Slavery and Diaspora* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2009), 155–167.
- , “Bori Practice Among Enslaved West Africans of Ottoman Tunis: Unbelief (*Kufi*) or Another Dimension of the African Diaspora?” *The History of the Family* 16–2 (2011): 152–159.
- , “The Trans-Saharan Slave Trade, Abolition of Slavery and Transformations in the North African Regency of Tunis, 1759–1846,” PhD dissertation, York University (York, 2007).

- Mudimbe, Valentin Y., *The Invention of Africa* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1988).
- Muḥammad al-Manūnī, *Fihris al-makḥṭūṭāt al-‘arabiya al-mahfūza fi al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma bi-l-Ribāṭ* (al-Dār al-Bayḍā’ [Casablanca: al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma li-l-Kutub wa-al-Wathā’iq, 1999–2000).
- Murābiṭī (al-), Sa’īd, *Fihris al-makḥṭūṭāt al-‘Arabiya almahfūza fi al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma bi-l-Ribāṭ* (al-Dār al-Bayḍā’ [Casablanca]: al-Khizāna al-‘Āmma li-l-Kutub wa-al-Wathā’iq, 2002).
- Nobili, Mauro, “African History and Islamic Manuscript Cultures,” in Brigaglia, Andrea and Nobili, Mauro (eds.), *The Arts and Crafts of Literacy: Manuscript Cultures in Muslim Sub-Saharan Africa* (Berlin-Boston: de Gruyter, 2017): 1–24.
- , “Muslim Brotherhoods in West African History,” Oxford Research Encyclopedia, 2021, <https://oxfordre.com/africanhistory/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.001.0001/acrefore-9780190277734-e-171?rskey=j5kbRC&result=2>.
- , *Sultan, Caliph, and Renewer of the Faith: Aḥmad Lobbo, the Tārīkh al-fattāsh and the Making of an Islamic State in Nineteenth-Century West Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).
- Ould Cheikh, Abdel Wadoud, “A Man of Letters in Timbuktu: Al-Shaykh Sidi Muhammad Al-Kuntī,” in Jeppie, Shamil and Diagne, Souleymane B. (eds.), *The Meanings of Timbuktu*, 231–247.
- Ould Daddah, Abdallah, “Ṣayh Sīdi Muhammed Wuld Sīd al-Muḥtar Al-Kuntī (1183H/1769-70-2 Ṣawwāl 1241/12 Mars 1826. Contribution à l’histoire politique et religieuse de Bilād Ṣinqīt et des régions voisines, notamment d’après les sources arabes inédites,” PhD dissertation, Université de Paris – Sorbonne (Paris, 1977).
- Reese, Scott S., “Islam in Africa / Africans in Islam,” *Journal of African History* 55 (2014), 17–26.
- Robinson, David, *The Holy War of Umar Tal: The Western Sudan in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985).
- Saaf, Abdallah (ed.), *Le Maroc et l’Afrique après l’indépendance. Actes de la journée d’étude organisée par l’Institut des études africaines et le Département de droit public de la Faculté des sciences juridiques, économiques et sociales de l’Université Mohammed V, Agdal, Rabat, le 26 novembre 1994* (Rabat: Université Mohammed V, Publications de l’Institut des Etudes Africaines, 1996).
- Ṣādqī (al-), Ḥasan, *Makḥṭūṭāt Aḥmad Bāba al-Timbukṭī fi al-khazā’in al-Maghribiyya* (Rabat: Université Mohammed V, Publications de l’Institut des Etudes Africaines, 1996).
- Sami, Said, and Mohamed Zniber, *Tuḥfat al-fuḍalā bi-ba’ḍ faḍā’il al-‘ulamā’* (Rabat: Université Mohammed V, Publications de l’Institut des Etudes Africaines, 1992).
- Sissoko, Boubacar, “Le cheikh al-Muḥtar aṣ-Ṣaḡīr al-Kuntī” (PhD dissertation, Université Lumière Lyon2 (Lyon, 2019).
- Syed, Amir, “Al-Ḥājj ‘Umar Tāl and the Realm of the Written: Mastery, Mobility and Islamic Authority in 19th Century West Africa,” PhD dissertation, University of Michigan (Ann Arbor, 2016).
- Timothy Cleaveland, “Ahmad Baba al-Timbukṭi and his Islamic Critique of Racial Slavery in the Maghrib,” *Journal of North African Studies* 20–1 (2015), 42–64.
- Touqif, Ahmed (ed.), *Le Maroc et l’Afrique subsaharienne aux débuts des temps modernes: les Sa’adiens et l’empire Songhay. Actes du colloque international organisé par l’Institut des*

- études africaines, Marrakech, 23-25 octobre 1992* (Rabat: Université Mohammed V, Publication de l'Institut des Etudes Africaines, 1995).
- Triaud, Jean-Louis, and David Robinson (eds.), *La Tijāniyya: une confrérie musulmane à la conquête de l'Afrique* (Paris: Karthala, 2005).
- Van Dalen Dorrit, *Doubt, Scholarship and Society in 17<sup>th</sup>-Century Central Sudanic Africa* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).
- Voll, John O., "Reconceptualizing the 'Regions' in 'Area Studies,'" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 41–2 (2009), 196–197.
- Walz, Terence, "The Paper Trade of Egypt and the Sudan in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries and Its Re-Export to the Bilād as-Sūdān," in Krätli, Graziano and Lydon, Ghislaine (eds.), *The Trans-Saharan Book Trade: Manuscript Culture, Arabic Literacy, and Intellectual History in Muslim Africa* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 74–107.
- Walz, Terence, and Kenneth M. Cuno (eds.), *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: Histories of Trans-Saharan Africans in Nineteenth-Century Egypt, Sudan, and the Ottoman Mediterranean* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010).
- Whitcomb, Thomas, "New Evidence on the Origins of the Kunta – I," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 38–1 (1975), 103–123.
- , "New Evidence on the Origins of the Kunta – II," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 38–2 (1975), 403–417.
- Wright, Zachary V., *Realizing Islam: The Tijaniyya in North Africa and the Eighteenth-Century Muslim World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020).
- Zebadia, Abdelkader, "The Career and Correspondence of Ahmad al-Bakkay of Timbuctu, from 1847 to 1866," PhD dissertation, University of London (London, 1974).
- Zezeza, Paul, "The Pasts and Futures of African Studies and Area Studies," *Ufahamu: Journal of the African Activist Association* 25–2 (1997), 5–41.
- Zouber, Mahmoud A., *Aḥmad Bābā de Tombouctou (1556–1627), sa vie et son Œuvre* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1977).