The Jews of Morocco under the Marinides (Continued)

Author(s): David Corcos

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THE JEWS OF MOROCCO UNDER THE MARINIDES

By David Corcos, Jerusalem

(continued from *JQR*, LIV [1964] 271-287)

III

The reign of Abu-Yussef Yakub

The Emir Abû-Iyḥya died in 1258. The Marinide '*Shiukh*' named his brother Abû-Yussef, who was governor of Taza and of the fortresses of the Muluya, to take his place. All of Marocco, with the exception of Marrakesh and the region around it, recognised the authority of the new Emir. The last Almohad surrendered in 1269 and his capital, Marrakesh lost. The political union of Morocco was thus restored.

In order to make the activities against the Almohads appear legitimate, the Marinides had asked that prayers be said in the name of the Hafçide Sultans of Tunis. But once Marrakesh was in his hands, Abû-Yussef maintained only superficial relations with the Hafçide court and styled himself 'Amir al-Muslimim' (Emir of the Moslems). He even granted asylum to a certain Al-Miliani, a dangerous enemy of the Hafçide Al-Mostancir, and gave him the town of Aghmat in fief.[42]

After the death of Al-Mostancir, Abu-Yussef became the most powerful ruler in the Moslem West. His numerous military interventions in Spain made him feared and respected. The twenty-eight years of his reign represent a period of calm and prosperity for Morocco.

In the very first years of Abu-Yussef's rise to power, the

[42] *Berbères*, II p. 302, III, p. 315, IV pp. 83 and 165.

Jews again figure in the accounts of the Arab chronicles, wherein they had not been mentioned for nearly a century. They appeared in the urban centres of Morocco and, as in the distant past when Idris II had made Fez his capital,[43] they once more were attracted to this city. They appeared also in Marrakesh where Rabbi Yehuda Djian [44] was the leader of the community. Although it is not possible to ascertain their number, they clearly belonged to three distinct groups: [45] former Zenata nomads who were clients of the Marinides; foreigners, Spanish and oriental; and, finally, autochthonous groups converted to Islam under the Almohads and now returned to Judaism, encouraged by the new spirit

[43] Fez was founded by Idris I before 790. His son Idris II established his capital there and attracted al large number of Jews to the town, both autochthonous and Oriental. It is accepted that many of these Jews were Jerawa-Zenata, driven from Ores by the Arab armies. In any case there were no Spanish Jews in Fez, as has been sufgested because they were expected to figure among the insurgents at Cordova who were driven from Spain in the year 198 of the Hegira (814). The majority of them in fact settled in Idris' capital. According to *Qirtâs*, tr. Beaumier, p. 55, this ruler allowed the Jews to settle in Fez on condition of an annual tribute (jezia) of 30,000 dinars. As the dinar was worth nine golden francs, the new community had to pay the equivalent of 279.000 golden francs per year, which gives an indication of its importance. Under Marinide rule, at various times, the Jewish community was comparable to what it had formerly been both in size and quality.

[44] The Djian family still exists in Morocco and Algeria. Rabbi Yhouda (ben) Djian, as his name shows, was Spanish. Djian is the Arabic name of the town of Jaen in Spain. He is believed to have died in Marrakesh around 1310. He was chief Rabbi of that town, which proves that the community of Marrakesh was able to reorganize itself as soon as Abû-Yussef captured the town. Rabbi Yhouda Djian is quoted by Rav Hida (Azulai) שם הגדולים I, p. 45, cf. also Toledano, op. cit. o. 41 and Youssef Benaîm מלכי רבנן Jerusalem, 5690, p. 100.

[45] These recently sedentary Jews suffered the same tribulations as the Marinides as we have stated (see p. II 2) They settled with them in Morocco. Another Zenata tribe, non-Marinide was not harassed when the Jews were driven away by the persecutions of the Toowat Oasis see p. I, 2 n. II). The 'Kunta', a Moslem Zenata tribe, was to follow them on the Moroccan border of the Western Sahara (cf. F. de la Chapelle, *Histoire du Sahara Occidental*, Hesperis, 1930, p. 85).

of tolerance of their present masters.[46] No specific documents exist confirming this return to Judaism. But this has long been accepted as a fact and is corroborated by events of a religious, social, political and economic nature which took place immediately after the Almohad era.

All indications lead us to suppose that the Marinides to some extent ignored the state of affairs which constituted a most serious crime according to *malekite* and *sunnite* law. Yet the Marinides championed this law, partly as a reaction against the rationalist ideas of the Almohads, partly because Malekite Islam, at one time imposed by the Almoravides, had indeed taken fertile roots in Morocco.

Malekite law imposed a death penalty upon converts who abandoned Islam.[47] Hence former converts to Islam to be

[46] The three groups in question seem to have had their own rabbis and therefore their own communal organization. We have noted, p. III, 1 and note 44, that there was a Spanish Rabbi in Marrakesh from the beginning of the Marinide rule. A Rabbi of Fez, R. David ben Zecri, who corresponded with R. Shlomo ben Adret of Barcelona (cf. Toledano, p. 40) was a Berber from the neighborhood of Marrakesh (cf. Benaîm, pp. 37-38) or rather, to be more exact, from the extreme South of Marocco. There was also in Fez a true representative of the old community of the town who was, naturally, its spiritual leader. I refer to R. Youssef Hacohen Hadayan ibn-Sussan, a descendant of the famous martyr, R. Yhouda ibn-Sussan, who was burnt alive by the Almohads in 1165 for refusing to become a convert to Islam. A pupil of R. Youssef ibn-Sussan, R. Yhouda al-Khorassani (of Khorassan) was later to be a leader of the Oriental Jews of Fez. About these rabbis and about many others in the period under review, not mentioned by us, see Toledano, passim and Benaîm, passim.

[47] The 'Murtadd' or apostate must, according to the 'Fiqh' (Moslem law) be put to death. The only question was whether, before his execution, he should be given the opportunity to repent. cf. Abu-Yussef Yakub (VIIIth century), *Kitâb al-Kharâdj*, Fr. transl. by E. Fagnan, entitled *Le Livre de l'Impot Foncier* Paris, 1921, pp. 275-282; al-Mâwerdi (XIth century) *al-Ahkâm al-Sultâniyya* Fr. transl. by E. Fagnan entitled *Les Statuts Gouvernementaux*, Algiers, 1915, p. 110 on the various opinions of Moslem lawyers on the subject, a see I. Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, vol. II, pp. 215-16. According to Malekite law and according to Ibn-Abî-Zayd al-Qayrawâni (Xth century), French and Arabic text by Léon Bercher, Algiers, 1952, pp. 250-51, 292-93, always the source on which laws applied in Marocco are based, the 'Ridda', i.e. apostasy was always punishable by death,

able to return to Judaism undoubtedly had to obtain the tacit consent of the temporal authority. The persons involved must have been known to the authorities. Certainly, it would have been impossible for them all to remain unnoticed, violating the law and flouting public opinion still imbued with the intolerance practised under the Almohads.

All Jews however, foreign or autochthonous, paid the *Jezia* required by law from all *dimmi*, protected persons in Islam lands. As a political measure intended to placate the hostility towards Jews, Abû-Yussef allocated part of this *Jezia* to the lepers, to the blind, and particularly to the *faqirs*. [48] This precaution did not pervent the population of Fez from adopting towards Jews, and in particular towards anyone known to be a former Moslem, a hostile attitude. We learn this from events which followed as well as from a text,[49] of a later date. The anonymous author of this text

unless the guilty person recognised his error, for which purpose three days' grace were allowed. Moroccans were still intransigeant on this point at the beginning of the last century. In 1820 a poor Jew, in a state of intoxication, went into a Mosque. To escape from the punishment of death, the penalty for such an ill he had to become converted immediately to Islam. He however expressed regret for having done so the following day. The Sultan Mulay Soliman, hearing of this, demanded that the head of the Jew be brought to him. It was brought to him, salted, in a little leather bag. (cf. Léon Godard, op. cit. p. 589) About 1830 Sol Hatchivel, a beautiful girl aged sixteen, had her head chopped off in Fez. The execution, exulted over in the chronicles of the period, inspired a great French painter, Dehodencq, to a famous painting "le supplice de la juive" She was executed because of the false testimony of an old Moorish woman;—this witness testified that she had heard the young Jewess recite the Moslem profession of faith.—Sol Hatchivel, who was attached to the faith of her forfathers, died the death of a martyr (cf. inter alia Urquart, *The Pillars of Hercules*, 2 vols. London, 1850, I. pp. 272-76) Since then, she has been considered a Saint by Jews, and, as is usual in Marocco, by Moslems also.

[48] *Qirtâs*, transl. Beaumier, p. 426. Throughout North Africa the word 'Faqir' means at one and the same time a poor, old man and a man devoted to God and the religion of Mohammed.

[49] Rabat Arabic MS no. 505 I, summarised by Louis Massignon, *Revue du Monde Musulman*, vol. LVIII, 1924, p. 221. The anonymous author of this MS apparently lived at the beginning of the XVIIth century.

however was making use of older sources which have to-day disappeared.

The former converts to Islam were the first to be frightened by the latent hostility which must have broken out from time to time. On the other hand decades, extending over at least two generations, during which the Jews became proficient in the art of pretending, and showing the appearances of good Moslems, must have made the Jews extraordinarily familiar with Moslem religion and habits. The weakest among them found it easy to become what they had been forced to seem to be for so long. In the Christian kingdom of Aragon, where Jews of African origin apparently found a refuge [50] from Almohad persecution, there were some who, without being put under any kind of preseure, simply fell back into the milieu in which they had lived. Pedro III was forced to ask that a suit be filed against three Jews accused, in his country of, having given up the Jewish faith in order to become Moslems.[51] It would be surprising if this attitude had not been a frequent factor in a Moslem state, especially under the threats of a people wont to be intolerant.

Yet the Marinides were far from sharing the hostile feelings of the people of Fez towards the Jews. The *Shiukhs*, the leaders and all the important people in the realm had Jewish stewards.[52] In intellectual as well as in commercial and

[50] The 'Ordonnances' of the kings of Aragon, published by Jean Régé (See note 51) made much of the arrival of Moroccan Jews in Christian Spain before 1250. The chronicler Joseph Hacohen, op cit. pp. 31-32 also wrote of the persecutions by the Almohads of the Jews who found a refuge in Calatrava and in other places occupied or by Christian kings.

[51] Jean Réné, *Catalogue des Actes de Jaime Ier, Pedro II et Alphonse III, Rois d'Aragon, concernant les Juifs*—1213-1291—*Revue des Etudes Juives*, vol. XIV, 1912, p. 71, no. 847, Acte du 26 Septembre 1280.

[52] *Berbères*, IV, p. 167, This custom, introduced in Marocco by the Marinides, was on the whole kept up until the end of the XIXth century. Much nearer to our own time, several great Berber 'Caîds', such as Hadj Thami al-Glaoui or the Caîd al-'Ayadi had Jewish stewards and Councillors, whose political role was by no means ne-negligible.

financial circles Jews held leading places. In short, they enjoyed once more in the reign of Abu-Yussef the favorable advantages which they had known before the rule of the Almohads and even of the Almoravides. Following on a period of persecution, however these favorable conditions inevitably aroused much jealousy. The Jews had enemies within and without. It was probably their new position in Marocco which decided the descendant of one of the greatest Almohad leaders, the Hafçide Al-Mostançir, to persecute the Jews in the kingdom of Tunis. They suffered greatly in this reign and experienced countless insults, as the historian Al-Kairouani tells us. [53]

We have stated that the inhabitants in Fez were far from pleased to see the former outlaws acquiring an importance which roused their envy and also shocked their religious feelings. The more or less disguised hostility broke forth one day under a pretext, insignificant in itself. [54] There was a rush towards the districts where the Jews lived, and on the 12th *Chaoual* 674 (10th March, 1276) a massacre began. Fourteen people had already been killed when the Sultan Abû-Yussef was informed of the matter. He immediately left his palace, mounted his horse, rode to the places where the sedition had broken out and halted it by his presence.[55] He later gave a formal order forbidding any troublemakers from approaching the houses of Jews.[56] Henceforth the Jews were able to live in peace.

[53] Abi-Dinar al-Qayrawsni *al-Mûnis fî Akhbar Ifrikyia wa Tûnis*, Fr. transl. by Pellissier de Reynaud, entitled *Histoire de l'Afrique* Paris 1845, p. 224. On these persecutions see also R. Brunschvig, op. cit. I, pp. 404-5.

[54] The Moslems accused a Jew of improper conduct towards a Moslem woman. They killed him and began a massacre of his coreligionists. cf. Dahira, p. 184.

[55] *Qirtâs*, tr. Beaumier, p. 459; *Istiqça*, IV, p. 75.

[56] Ibid. There is however an important anonymous chronicle, witten circa 1381, entitled *al-Holal al-Mawchîya fî Dhikr al-Marrâkochiya*, Tunis edition, 1911, which on p. 132, relates that the Emir Abu-Yussef, whom it called Abu-Muhammad, himself massacred the Jews of Fez. There is surely a distortion of the original text here

The attitude of the Sultan in this matter is an indication not only of mere interest in the Jews, but of real sympathy for them. He had gone in person to their help. It is possible that this conduct represented a desire on the part of Abû-Yussef, whom Arab authors represent as religious, to conform to certain *hâdit*, as for instance the one who made the prophet Mohammed say: "Do you, any of you, comfortably ensconced among your cushions, by any chance believe that God only forbids those things which form the subject of prohibitions in the Koran? In truth, by God. I have proclaimed edicts, orders and prohibitions which are as valid as this koran, if not more. In truth, God does not allow us to break into the houses of Jews without authority, to illtreat their women and eat away their provisions, if they fulfill their own obligations."[57] The desire of the Marinide Emirs to show their attachment to the *Sunna* and their opposition to the principles of the Almohad doctrine may, thus, well explain Abû-Yussefs behavior. Yet others, as attached as he, if not more so, to Islam tradition, showed no intention whatever of exposing their persons in order to save the *Ahl-dimma* these *moâheds*, deserving, after all, according to some interpretations of the tradition and of the Koran, the contempt of 'believers'.[58] Another, rather more plausible explanation

by the scribe. This entitles us to say that the act of Abu-Yussef was not approved by all Moslems.

[57] I. Goldziher, op. cit. p. 136. There are also other *hâdit* well-disposed towards the Jews, as e.g. the one who said "No Jew should be troubled in his Judaism", a statement which incidentally simply complements the Sourat, 2, verse 257 (no constraint in religion); or again "He who does harm to a 'dimmi' is as if he did harm to me", although the one who attributed these words to the prophet was a 'hanifite', as-Subki (*Tabakat* al-châfiyya I, 269) and not a 'malekite'.

[58] Jewish and Christian subjects of a Moslem state were either 'dimmi' or 'mouahedin' (plural of 'mouahed'). The 'dimmi' were protected persons committed to certain, non-fixed obligations, the most important of which was the payment of the capitation tax 'jezia'. The 'mouahedin' were people whose ancestors apparently made an agreement with their Moslem conquerors,—the agreement was called an 'âhd'—ensuring the practice of their religion and the posession of their goods to them.

was offered by the ingenious Ibn-Khaldūn. In his view, the behavior of Abū-Yussef was that of a nomad to whom solidarity matters more than religious considerations. It is possible that the presence of Zenata of the Jewish faith in Fez induced the sovereign to act in accordance with the fellow-feeling which distinguished both nomad and settled Berbers alike. Ibn Khaldūn [59] has given a very clear definition of this group spirit; it is, he says, "the fellow-feeling and selflessness which make every individual risk his life for the welfare of his friends."

Immediately following the event just related, the Sultan decided to start on the construction of a new city, its site to be next to Fez. It was called the White Town and was later to become *Fez jedid* (the new Fez), as opposed to *Fez el-bali* (the old Fez). As the massacre of the Jews and the founding of the new town took place almost simultaneously, many modern historians [60] have thought that, in order better to protect the Jews, Abû-Yussef moved them to Fez-jedid, to the part named *Mellah* which was indeed to become their district, though only much later.[61] The same reasons led these historians to believe that the first Jewish converts to Islam in Fez were those who, at that particular moment, preferred to keep their palaces in Old Fez rather than abandon them in order to remain Jews and have to live on the quarter called *Mellah* of New Fez. This view is based in an event which probably affected other Jews of Fez, at the time when their particular district was established,—the first and for a long time the only event of its kind in Marocco. This analogous situation was as follows: When the *Mellahs* of Rabat and Salee were created (15th *Cha'bân* 1223, 16th October 1808), some Jewish families, newly rich and owners of property in those parts of the town where they had lived until then among

[59] *Prolégomènes*, Fr. transl. by de Slane, p. 318. cf. E.F. Gautier, *Le Passé de l'Afrique du Nord*, pp. 113-14.

[60] Inter alia Henri Terrasse, op. cit. II, p. 30.

[61] After 1400. On this question see Gaudefroy-Demombynes Marocain *Mellâh*, *Journal Asiatique*, I, 1914, pp. 651-658.

Moslems, preferred conversion to abandoning their houses. [62]

We possess the manuscript text mentioned above about the origin of the first converts to Islam.[63] It appears to come nearer to the truth of the situation and informs us that "many Jews were converted to Islam because they feared the sword... The Emir Abû-Yussef forbade that they be massacred. At that moment those who had refused conversion mocked those who had been converted and called them *Mohajir*, i.e. émigrés, a term which has been kept for them. [64] The new converts were far from well received by the other

[62] Muhammad ed-Do'ayyif (1752-1820?), MS without title (Chronique alâwite) No. D. 660 of the Library of Rabat, pp. 448-51. cf. Jacques Caille, *La Ville de Rabat*, 3 vols. Paris, 1949, I, pp. 323-24; *Istiqça, Les Alawites*, Fr. transl. by E. Fumey, Archives Morocaines, vol. X, pp. 103-04; L. Brunot, *Textes arabes de Rabat*, Paris, 1931, p. XIII; by the same author, *Topographie dialectale de Rabat, Hesperis*, 1930, pp. 10-11.

[63] See supra p. 111, 2 and note 49.

[64] 'Mohajir' may also be the surname given to Islamised Jews up to the XVIIth century. It was not used later either by Jews or Moslems. The latter continued officially to call the Jewish convert 'Islami' and the Christian convert 'Euldj.' Jews emigrating from Spain referred to Jewish apostates as 'Tornadissos', which in old Spanish meant those who changed their religion. Towards the end of the XIIth century, the king of Aragon, James II, forbade the Moslems and Jews in his kingdom to call converts 'Tornadissos', cf. Jean Régné, *Catalogue d'Actes pour servir à l'histoire des Juifs de la Couronne sous le règne de Jaime II*—1291-1327, *Revue des Etudes Juives*, vol. LXXIII, p. 205, no. 2427. The word was later corrupted, since Jews, between 1767 and 1782 gave the name 'Tournadis' to Islamised persons. cf. Louis de Chénier, *Recherches Historiques sur les Maures et Histoire de l'Empire du Maroc*, Paris 1787, 3 vols. III, p. 130. As to Moslems, not of Jewish origin, they still call those among them, with a certzin irony, 'al Beldîyyin' i.e. people of the vine, cf. Roger Le Tourneau, *Fès avant le Protectorat*, Casablanca, 1949, pp. 205 and 491, in contrast to themselves either Andalusians or 'Chorfax', that is people descended from the prophet or Arabs and therefore Orientals, never autochthonous. Thus popular memory as well as familiarity of texts by literate people still known, or unknown, confirms the fact that the Mohajir, later 'el-beldîyyin', were indeed Jews who lived in Fez before and during the rule of the Almohads and who had originally been forcibly converted. There are no former Jews of Spanish descent today among those Islamised This fact should be emphasized for several reasons.

sections of the population. Both Jews and Moslems mistrusted the competition of these converts in certain forms of business; Moslems, in particular, accused them of lying, of fraud and of taking usury. The poorest because of their conversion were able to take up occupations reserved for 'believers' only. Complaints, justified or not, poured in about poor and rich alike. The *Cadi* (Judge) of Fez had to send in his resignation "because legal action, (*nawâzil*), having no basis in canonical texts, was taken against the new converts, provoking a profusion of 'questions and ans wers' (responsa) among jurists". The Sultan, Abû-Yussef, had to intervene and to restrict them to money *arbitrage*, carpentry, and to the grocery meat and dairy trade. A few among them were individually given permission to enter other business under supervision; and a defaulter was punished by *Tatûif*, that is his name and deed were both publicized. Yet, as to-day, the *Mohajir* were prominent in big business. Moslem families in Fez with a long-standing tradition of commerce generally bear family names which are either obviously Jewish or which indicate a Jewish origin. Examples of the best known among these are Sebti, [65] Benni or Bennani, [66] Lahlou, [67] Guessous, [68]

[65] as-Sâbti, de Sebta, Ceuta. The Jewish community was very important before and perhaps even during the Portuguese occupation of the town from 1415. Ceuta was the chief naval base of the Marinides and was the most important port of Morocco in the Middle Ages. It was the native town of many learned Rabbis such as Yussef ibn-Aknin, the famous disciple of Maimonides. A certain ʿAbd al-Haq al-Islami (Jew converted to Islam) a native of Ceuta, wrote a work against his former coreligionists, at the very beginning of the XIVth century cf. Steinschneider, *Polemische Literatur*, p. 125; by the same author, *Die Arabische Literatur der Juden*, p. 126.

[66] Ben en-nis, son of the miracle.

[67] Lahlou means the sweet. They were apparently so called because originally they were said to have lived in 'el-har' (the bitter), near the 'Fondouq al-yhoudi', (the warehouse of the Jew), where, before the forming of the Mellah, the Jewish quarters of ancient Fez were situated. cf. Massignon. op. cit. p. 151.

[68] de 'Messous'? (tasteless) a name sometimes given to the Mellah (the salted).

La'zari,[69] Berrada,[70] Guennoun, a name still found among the Jews of Morocco, as likewise Ben-Chokroun, Tazi, Ben-Hayon, Dadon and Kohen which some changed to el-Kouhou, in order not to be mistaken for their former coreligionists. [71]

The converts to Islam did not obtain by their conversion the sympathy either of the people or of the rulers. Consequently, they generally married within their own group, a fact which, incidentally, makes them recognisable even today.[72] In present-day Fez, where the maintained clans are based on ethnic origins, there persist, R. Le Tourneau tells us, [73] between converts of even long standing and the city's aristocracy "a few slight discriminations, hardly noticeable yet very real and not subject to the erosion of time. . . Never would any matchmaker agree to organise for converts to Islam certain ceremonies reserved to the aristocracy of Fez". Yet in that discreet, refined, civilised society, rivalries have no serious consequences. In Rabat and, especially, in Salee, where fanaticism occasionally dominates the puritan bourgeoisie, one may perhaps hear *'al-Ichouri bâqué khdar'*, (the Jew is still green, fresh,) in other words the convert still remains a Jew; whence the popular saying "the Jew becomes a good Moslem only after forty generations". Moreover, in Rabat the convert to Islam is subjected to certain specific epithets. [74] In Marrakesh, Moslems who do not like the *Fassis* (people of Fez) will say, after a quarrel with one of them,

[69] cf. Massignon, op. cit.

[70] From 'Berr-Yhou-da', land of Judah ? or de Ben 'Ada, which became Berrada. Ada is a Biblical female first name. cf. Gen, IV, 19; XXXVI, 2. Berrada may also be a surname. It means a porous water jug.

[71] cf. Paquignon, *Quelques Documents sur la Condition des Juifs au Maroc. Revue du Monde Musulman*, IX, p. 115 and note 2.

[72] Louis de Chénier, op. cit. p. 130 and, a little later, William Lemprière, *A Tour from Gibraltar. . . to Morocco*, London, 1791, p. 331 already made this observation. Modern authors have also made it very frequently.

[73] R. Le Tourneau, op. cit. p. 491.

[74] See L. Brunot,op. cit.

'Allah in'al al Mellah ou Ma laḥ' (May God curse the Mellah and what He has cast out). Finally, there is a proverb common in the whole of Marocco, which says "Take a sack, put into it wheat, barley, chick peas and some Mellah, and you will have the population of Fez (Old Fez.)", to this will sometimes be added *'Fas blad bla nas'*, Meaning Fez is a city without people, implying people of good origin. And yet, as Massignon stresses [75], these converts to Islam were not pseudo-converts like the *Deunmeh* or the *Marranos*, but, fervent Moslems. In fact, they have given to Moslem Morocco Vizirs and other high ranking officials, eminent lawyers, scholars and even saints. [76] But, as we have seen, their situation under Abû-Yussef was not enviable. They could be mocked by the Jews who had remained faithful to their religion. The latter, as opposed to the *Mohajir*, simply had to pay the *Jezia*, which seems to have been neither smaller nor greater than the *kharaj* tax paid by the Moslems, and could hence if they wished, enjoy the fruits of their labor in peace. Their rabbis and scholars were held in great esteem by all sections of the population. Others, chief stewards and advisers of the great of the land, occupied the most important positions. Gradually, delicate missions were entrusted to them. When Abû-Yussef went to Spain in the holy war for the last time and left the heir to the throne, Abû-Yakub, in command of the Marinide army the latter gave one of his generals the charge of two hundred horsemen, among them Andalusians and Jews who were assigned to seek information about the position of Don Sancho of Castille and to explore

[75] Louis Massignon, op. cit.

[76] An Idrisside Cherif of Fez, al-Mâmoun ben 'Omar al-Kattêni (d. 1892) wrote a treatise on the Islamised people of his native town, cf. Lévi-Provençal, *Historiens des Chorfas*, Paris, 1922, p. 378; cf. also in the same work, pp. 255, 258, 312, 340, 373 and 375 ff. Usually, converts to Islam always maintained excellent relations with their former coreligionists. There were and are still examples of deep friendship between citizens of Fez converted centuries ago and Jewish citizens of Morocco.

Seville.[77] Economically, socially and politically, the position of the Jews of Morocco was so good that the King of Aragon, Alfonso III, chose two Jews from his court, Abraham and Samuel 'Abengelel',[78] to go on a mission to Marocco in December 1286, a few months after the death of Abû-Yussef. The 'Abengelel' or Aben-Jillal were no doubt charged to bring the good wishes of their master to Abû-Yakub who had just acceded to the throne.[79]

IV

The reign of Abû-Yakub Yûssef (1286-1307)

Abû-Yakub was recognized as the new Sultan without any protest from the Vizirs, the leading figures in the kingdom or from the general population. In the remoter provinces, however, the Marinide princes, as always prey to their ambition, seized upon the occasion of a change of rule to take up arms. They were defeated, killed or exiled one after another The insurgents were supported by nomad Arab tribes, who

[77] *Qirtâs*, tr. Besaumier, p. 513. It is probable that there were also Jews among the Berghwata integrated into the Marinide armies fighting in Spain. cf. *Quirtâs*, p. 493.

[78] This should perhaps be read as Aben-Jillal, a Judaeo-Arabic name found in various forms in North Africa. It may also be read, with rather more likelihood, Aben (ben) Galil. The family in question really, originated from Marocco. A Maroccan Rabbi of the period of the first Marinides (before and a little after 1300), who left us valuable information about his milieu, was called Rabbi Yussef ben Galil cf. Toledano, op. cit. He was from the town of Ceuta, cf. Benaîm, op. cit. p. 110. The father of the two ambassadors of the king of Aragon was also called Yussef 'Abengelel' or ben Galil. See note 79. Was it perhaps the same man?

[79] "Alfonso III, out of regard for Abraham Abengelel and Samuel Abengelel, sons of Jusef Abengelel, who were leaving on a mission in his service to the king of Marocco, in a desire to reward them for the numerous services they had rendered to Pedro III, freed them, from every royal exaction excepting the tax (tribute) during their lifetime. Majorque, 16 décembre 1286". cf. Jean Régné, op. cit. *Revue des Etudes Juives*, vol. LXVII, 1914, p. 223.

were bandits by choice and the declared enemies of the established order. Abû-Yakub punished them severely but they remained a disturbance to him in the whole of the Maghrib, and later brought about his downfall.

In the Rif it was the powerful Marinide tribe of the Beni Wattas—themselfs to assume power towards the end of the XVth century—which raised the flag of revolt; nor was it easy for the new Sultan to bring about their defeat. Finally the sovereign's own son took up arms and declared himself independent. Beaten and pursued, he sought refuge at the court of Tlemcen, together with the governor of Marakesh who had incited him to revolt.

The Abd-al-Wadites or Zeyanites, founders and rulers of the kingdom of Tlemcen, although themselves of the Zenata race, were the hereditary enemies of the Marinides. They therefore refused to deliver up the two rebels when Abû-Yakub asked for them. This was the pretext for the bitter fight which the Marinide Sultan waged on the Zeyanite kingdom and which was to last fourteen years. When the remaining territory was lost, the capital Tlemcen suffered the longest siege in history, eight years and three months.

Taken up with this fighting and less concerned with Holy War than his father had been, the new Sultan had, immediately on his accession, restored to Ibn-Ahmar, sovereign of Granada, the stronghold situated in Andalusia which the Nacride had given to the Marinides in return for their help against the Christians of Castille. Abu-Yakub renewed the peace treaty of 1285 with Don Sancho the king of that country. However, neither the people of Castille nor those of Granada, who had become their subjects and who, incidentally, were continually betraying one another, made agreements in good faith with the Marinides. Consequently, the Spanish policy of Abû-Yakub simply aimed at parrying any danger which might come from the other side of the straits On the other hand, Abû-Yakub found a faithful ally in the King of Aragon. The faithfulness was ensured by the fact

that Aragonese and Moroccans had an equal distrust of the Christian kings of Castille and the Moslem kings of Granada. For this reason the Marinide sovereign and James II of Aragon established friendly relations, which were continually maintained and consolidated by renewed ambassadorial exchanges. Important and delicate missions of this kind were entrusted to Jews.

We have seen that two Jews, the 'Abengelel' brothers, were sent to Morocco by Alfonso III in 1286 to convey good wishes to the new Sultan, and probably also to talk of matters other than protocol, of interest to the two rulers. This embassy was followed up by the mission of a Moroccan Jew to Aragon, referred to by Spanish documents as *Asah el-Judio*, [80] which means Isaac the Jew. Abû-Yakub entrusted him with a message for the successor of Alfonso III, James II, who acknowledged its receipt in a letter dated Barcelona, 8th July, 1294. At the same time the King of Aragon accredited a new ambassador to the court of Abû-Yakub. Again the ambassador was a Jew, one of the *alfaqvim* (interpreter-secretary) of James II, called Samuel, who was also charged with a mission from the King at the court of the King of Grenada and of the Queen of Castille. [81] It seems obvious that in the interest of peace in Spain James II sought to comply with a request made by Abû-Yakub and thus to be free for a serious attack on Tlemcen. [82] First, however, no doubt because he wished to please his Christian and Jewish subjects who had considerable economic interests

[80] Açah or Içah, phonetically Izaḥ, Judaeo-Berber diminutive form of the name Isaac. Less than twenty years ago, all Jews from Southern Morocco in the chleuh region, bearing the name of Isaac, were generally called Izaḥ. In districts where beduin Arabic acquired a great influence, in Tafilalet or in Draa, people named Isaac were called Ḥaqi. I shall in the future have occasion to comment upon the diminutive forms of Jewish first names in Morocco and to show how important it is to know them.

[81] Jean Régné, op. cit. letters or documents, nos. 2513, 2525, 2526, 2529 and 2552.

[82] ibid. document no. 2390.

in the kingdoms of Tlemcen and of Fez, the King of Aragon sought to reestablish peace between the two enemy courts. To this end he had first, in 1291, sent one of the 'Abengelel' brothers, Abraham, to Tlemcen. Then, in May 1293, he sent there "his familiar and faithful Bondavin, *alfaqim*, charged with a secret mission". The Jewish diplomatic envoy "was to begin by greeting the King of Tlemcen on behalf of the King of Aragon and to say all the good of him he knew". [83] But all these efforts were of no avail. The war between Abû-Yakub and the Zeyanites became fiercer and the the equivocal attitude of the people of Grenada and of Castille towards the Marinides was to result in the attack and capture of Ceuta while Abû-Yakub was outside the walls of Tlemcen.

The geographical positions of Marocco and Aragon as well as the political circumstances and economic interests of both countries, necessarily created strong links between them. Nor were the Jews indifferent to this rapprochement. Apparently the Jews of Morocco, mostly Berbers of the region or recently arrived Zenata, generally had continual contacts only with their coreligionists in the kingdom of Aragon after the Almohad storm and even under the first Marinides. It is true that a large number were of recent African origin. The emigration of African Jews to Aragon had been encouraged for a long time. As early as 1247, James I "grants safe conduct" and letters of naturalization to all Jews who, by land or sea, wish to come and settle in his lands. In the same year (11th June, 1247) a charter was promulgated in Valencia in which the King of Aragon "accords his protection to certain Jews of Marocco, and in general to all Jews, wherever they may come from, wishing to settle in his dominions, in Majorca, Barcelona or Valencia, and forbids his subjects to molest them or do them any wrong whatsoever, under penalty of a fine of one thousand golden pence". [84] This policy was scrupulously maintained by the heirs of James I. Thus

[83] ibid. documents no. 2481, 2482 and 2483.
[84] ibid. REJ. vol. IV, 1882, p. 32 and n.l.; vol. LX, 1910, p. 162.

Pedro III, in 1278, granted safe conducts to Hayon ben Amar Ablarach, Isach Abenjucef Annafusi, Isaach Jucef Benbolfaratz (ben Abu-l'Faradj), Ismael Honnazan (ben Hazan), all Jews of "Barbary" coming to settle in his estates. [85] In 1285, a certain Isaac 'Daray', coming from the region south of Draa, was living in Barcelona.[86] Later, a Jewish doctor from Morocco, Master Abraham, was granted permission, together with all his family, to settle in the lands of the crown of Aragon.[87] A Jew of Ceuta, Salomon Cohen Abengaçez (Abecassis) soon enjoyed the same privileges. [88] We are here obviously mentioning only a few instances. There were certainly many others.

During the reigns of Abû-Yussef and of Abû-Yakub, his

[85] ibid. REJ vol. LXIII, 1912, p. 251.

[86] ibid. REJ vol. LXVII, 1914, p. 70.

[87] ibid. document no. 3023.

[88] ibid. document no. 3284. The name 'Abecassis' is of particular interest to us (see infra note 118). It is fairly widespread in present day Morocco. The literal meaning is 'father of the Cassis'. 'Cassis' means vicar, monk, rabbi and in Christian writings sometimes 'faquih'. The word 'Cassis' is found in the writings of Christian travellers and of Arabic authors until the XVIIIth century. Moslems gave the name 'al-Qâṣṣiṣ' to priests of revealed religions, originally, I believe, in derision. This name comes from 'Qâṣṣ' or 'Qâṣṣaṣ', plural: Quṣṣaṣ', i.e. story-tellers, but story-tellers whose tales were more sacred then those told by narrators of profane anecdotes. The 'Qusṣaṣ' were accepted in the early days of Islam. The name was given a pejorative sense as a result of their false prophecies. They were associated with astrologers and diviners so that 'Qaṣṣaṣ' came to indicate astrologer as well as narrator, public storyteller. Administrative measures were taken against them in the time of the first Eastern Califs (On the 'Quṣṣaṣ' cf. I. Goldziher, *Muhammedanische Studien*, II, pp. 161 ff.). Later the word was a term designating priests, both Jewish and Christian. 'Abecassis' therefore means father of the Rabbi and, by changing the prefix, as has been done by Arabs, the relationship was changed and the name then came to means 'son of a Rabbi' (ould al-Ḥazan or even more simply Ḥazan whether Cassis or Cazès which is the Hispanised form). The 'Abecassis' of the Aragonese document referred to above is a Cohen. His full name is: Isaac Cohen, son of Salomon Abecassis. Abecassis here is a surname in exactly the same way as was that of the members of the famous Guedalla family at the end of the XVIIIth century in Mogador, who were called 'Oulad al-Ḥazan'. cf. Samuel Romanelli משא בערב Vienna, 1834, p. 69.

son, the Jews of Grenada, while speaking Arabic and sharing arabic culture and way of life as their coreligionsts of Morocco did, in a Moslem environment, seem to have maintained hardly any contacts with the Jews of Fez or of the other large ports, Salee, Arzila, Tangier and, in particular, Ceuta. The Jews, as was natural, accepted the views of the governments under which they lived; and the feelings of Moroccans towards the people of Grenada, whether justified or not, are well known. As regards the Castillians, Christians we know that they were mostly at war with the Marinides. But the people of Aragon were their friends. Two other reasons may better explain the attitude of the Jews of Morocco. The town of Barcelona had long been an important center of Jewish life and was to retain its leading position in Western Jewry until the terrible year 1391. It is quite normal that Fez and other cities in the Marinide kingdom should wish to maintain permanent contact with this centre of Judaism. On the other hand it must be remembered that, until the first decade of the XIVth century, the Berber character of the Moroccan Jews prevented any sympathy with Jews of Andalusia or Grenada on account of the Arab culture with which they were deeply imbued. Here, as in Moslem circles, a rapid change was to take place among Jews. This explains how urban centres in Morocco, profoundly influenced by the Arab civilisation of Spain, remained almost alone in preserving the particular character of this civilisation. Andalusian trends in thought, in art and literature at that time were dominant both in Fez and in Grenada. Yet, in spite of these affinities the Jews of Morocco felt more attracted to Barcelona and to other centres of Aragonese Judaism. There is, no doubt, a certain amount of mutual feeling here, as, more than a century and a half later, in 1492, the first Jews expelled from Aragon felt attracted to Morocco, [89] while the

[89] There are no signs of this preference after the terrible persecutions in Spain in 1391. Emigrés from Aragon and Majorca went rather to the kingdom of Tlemcen, of which Algiers was a dependency,

Jews of Castille were to migrate to Portugal and most of those from Southern Spain to Italy and, especially, to Turkey. Although no generalisation should be drawn here, the similarity of names, in Spanish documents and texts of the late Middle Ages and Renaissance with those appearing in Morocco just after 1492 seems to confirm this view. Apart from the names already mentioned, as for instance Abecassis and others of Moroccan origin, these documents and texts show names of Castillian Jews belonging to persons established in the kingdom of Aragon, in Terruel, Valencia, Tarragon and Barcelona. Thus we have Amiel, [90] Corcos [91] Sebag, [92] or Toledano, [93] to mention only the most famous. The names Taurel (de Terruel), Valensi, Valenciano or al-Balansi (from Valencia), Barchilon (from Barcelona) are widespread in Morocco and belonged to the first families to arrive in the land from Spain. [94]

The mutual attraction is to be explained, as we have seen

as well as to Tunisia. The reason for this was that the situation in Marocco was one of incredible anarchy. It should however be remembered that the Chief Rabbi of Fez, who corresponded with R. Simon ben Zemah Duran of Algiers was at that time R. Isaac Nahmias (cf. Isidore Epstein, *the Responsa of Rabbi Simon ben Zemah Duran*, London, 1930, p. 102 and note 83) and that a certain Abraham 'Abenamies' (Aben-Nahmias) was one of the alfaquim of James II of Aragon in 1291 (cf. Jean Régné, document no. 2387).

[90] Jean Régné, op. cit. document no. 1380 of 3rd June 1285.

[91] ibid. documents no. 1301 of 6th March 1284; 1313; 1813 (Nov. 1287); 2019 (1289); 2176 (1290). One of the sixteen rabbis who took part in the famous colloquium of Tortosa in Aragon (in 1412) was called Yom-Tob Carcosa or Corcos (cf. Ibn-Verga, Hanover edition, p. 68). The Corcos family living in Castille went to Italy after 1492. Others, from the XVIth to the XIXth century, emigrated from Marocco to Leghorn and to London.

[92] REJ vol, LX, 1910, pp. 176-77: a certain 'Seba' in Daroca in 1257. The name may also be 'Sebag' (as-Sebagh in Arabic) or Sabah or Saba', all well-known names in Marocco.

[93] Jean Régné op. cit. document no. 2643 of 22nd June 1297. James II intervened in favor of Abraham Toledano. This is the first known Toledano.

[94] cf. Abraham Encaoua or Alnaqua, ספר כרם חמד 2 vols. Livorno 5629 and 5631, II, (ספר התנקות) p. fol. 2 et seq.

by the establishment of relations dating back to the end of the XIIIth century and maintained, apparently without interruption, throughout the reign of Abû-Yakub, and even afterwards. Relations existed in various spheres, religious, intellectual, and above all, economic. In fact, Aragon, always at peace with Morocco and often its ally, had most important trade links with that country. [95] This was the period when

[95] cf. Mas-Latrie, op.cit. passim; Charles E. Dufourq, *La Question de Ceuta au XIII e siècle*, *Hesperis*, vol XLII, 1955, pp 69-71, 116 ff. In the period in question trade was first in the hands of the Catalans in Ceuta, of the Venetians in Tangier, of the Genoese in the Atlantic ports and of natives of Marseilles also in Ceuta. Jewish capitalists in Marseilles, among them a certain Bonfils, were very prominent in this trade. Jews played a leading role, in the contacts between Christian capitalists of Marseilles and the port of Ceuta, between Fez and the interior of Morocco. (cf. Pierre Boissonnade, *Les Relations Commerciales de la France méridionale avec l'Afrique du Nord ou Maghreb du XII au XVIe siecle* in Bulletin du Comité des Travaux Historiques et Scientifiques, vol. XLIX, 1929, pp. 16-20; Gisèle Chovin, *Aperçu sur les Relations de la France avec le Maroc des origines à la fin du Moyen-Age*, *Hesperis*, vol. XLIX, 1957, p. 272 ff. It is likely that for such journeys they hid behind the mask of Islam, except for those who went no further than Ceuta, a free town, completely independent of the Almohads since 1243. Montpellier and Narbonne, where Jewish communities flourished, also engaged in extensive trade with Marocco Benjamin de Tudèle pointed this out in the XIIth century (cf. *the Itinerary of Rabbi Benjamin of Tudèla*, English transl. by A. Asher, New-York, s.d., p. 33) He also stated that there were two important merchants of Ceuta in Genoa, R. Shmuel ben Khilan and his brother (ibid. p. 37). The trade of Genoa was abandoned after the attempt on the part of its sailors to take the port, but the trade of Montpellier and Narbonne with Morocco increased when these two towns came under the rule of Aragon kings. In Seville, a Jewish elite of Moroccan origin lived, the most representative being the illustrious family of the Ibn-Sussan or Ibn-Shoshan. A poet also lived there once Joseph al-Qarawi (of Qoirou), a very rich merchant "whose name was known even in the midst of the caravans of Africa" (cf. Bernard Chapira, *Contribution à l'Etude du Divan de Todros ben Yehouda Halevi Abulafia*, REJ, vol. VI (CVI) pp. 20, 25). It is however, as Mas-Latrie and later Charles E. Dufourcq, point out, the kingdom of Aragon which finally absorbed the greater part of Maroccan trade. Aragon Jews were the most interested in this; they provided subsidies for James II to arm a navy which took Ceuta away from Grenada and delivered it, in 1309, to the Marinides.

the Jews of the oases, of Sijilsmassa and Toowat, monopolized Thranssahara trade. They controlled exclusively all business with the Black Africa lands on the far side of the immense desert. It was this fact, incidentally, which gave such extraordinary power to the Jews of Gurara and Toowat.[96] In this sphere they had little or no competition to fear for the simple reason that,'Malekism' having finally become dominant the Moslems left the Sahara trade entirely to the Jews, and to Jewish and Christian exporters and importers the equally vast trade conducted between their countries and Europe. In his *Risâla*, Ibn Abï Zayd al-Qayrawâni, whom we have

[96] Some idea of this power of al-magilli, albeit much weakened by the end of the XVth century, may be obtained by reading the lengthy memoir compiled by a pious jurisconsult who tried to justify ths violence against the Jews of Toowat: The work begins with the words: "Honor to our brother, the zealous doctor who, in these days of corruption, has found courage to let his faith step forth into the light of day by rising up against abuses and bringing back half-hearted spirits to the sentiments of the true religion. It will be to his glory that he spent so much energy opposing the undertakings of the Jewish nation (may God crush them with His contempt). He alone was steadfast enough to stand up against those whom worldly interest makes deaf to the voice of the prophet". It must be remembered that if the Jews defended themselves or were defended, it was because they had with their own hands created the wonderful oases of Toowat and Gurara. Some of them carried on a trans-sahara traffic; But what earned them even greater consideration was their skill; they were experienced in agriculture: they constructed the Artesian wells which gave and still give life to these parts of the desert. They were the benefactors of the desert, creators of oases, founders of 'Ksours', constructors of Artesian wells, they besides made these districts into great store houses of the desert. It is hence not surprising that the great opponent of al-Maghilli was the Cadi of Toowat himself, Al-Asmouni. People there to-day still speak of the days of the Jews' with a certain pious respect; Moslem women regularly make pilgrimages to localities where tradition places the tombs of the Jewish victims of Al-Maghilli (on this question see E. Gautier, *Oasis Sahariennes in Recueil de Memoires et de Textes publié en l'honneur du XIVe Congres des Orientalites'*, Algiers, 1905, pp. 340-43). This gives an idea of the position of these Jews during the Marinide period, of the condition of these Zenata Jews, who as we have said, came to Morocco with the Marinides.

already mentioned, [97] wrote as follows: "It is blameworthy to conduct trade in enemy territory and in the Sudan. And, moreover, the prophet said: 'Travelling is part of the punishment'." [98] This was discouraging to any commercial initiative on the part of Moslems. This 'advice' was supplemented by further difficulties for Moslems: "One must not", Ibn Abî Zayd added "make use of either the feathers or horns or nails or teeth of such animals (who died without having had their throats slit ritually). To use an elephant's tusk is blameworthy (*makruh*)". [99] In fact, ostrich feathers and ivory were among the most important goods brought to Morocco from the African interior, even until nearly the end of the last century. The basis of this commerce, however, was gold dust, the famous *tibar* or *TBR*, which in antiquity made Morocco the punic gold market, [100], and which from the Middle Ages until the end of the XVIIth century gave to its rulers the reputation of being among the richest in the world. Here, too, the buying and selling of gold in powder form, in ingots or wrought form, presented such difficulties to the religious Moslem, and particularly to those of the Malekite school, that they always preferred to leave such things to the care of the Jews in their land. [101]

The Sultan lent the weight of his support to this 'arrangement, by which he profited. Only tributaries, Jewish and

[97] See supra, p. N, 8, note 47.

[98] Ibn Abi Zayd, p. 319. The Moslems called the lands inhabited by infidels where the law of Islam could not be officially observed 'dâr-al-ḥarb' (the house of war) as opposed to 'dâr al-islam' (the house of Islam), identified by them with the 'world of justice', the lands of the infidel being 'the world of injustice'. On this question see louis Gardet, *La Cité Musulmane*, Paris 1954, p. 26 and note 4.

[99] Ibn Abi-Zayd, p. 297.

[100] Jérôme Carcopino, *Le Maroc Antique*, Paris, 1943, pp. 73-163.

[101] On the Jewish jewellers in Morocco, on the trade in gold and coining of money under Marinide rule, cf. a very curious document of the XIVth century, reproduced for the first and only time under the title *Manuscrit Hadj Lahsen* by J.B. Brethes, in *'Contribution à l'Histoire du Maroc par les recherches numismatiques'*, Casablanca, 1939, pp. 253-267.

Christian, paid a duty, fixed at 10% by the Malekite school, on trade between one country and another "even if they make several such journeys a year". [102] Christians from Genoa, Venice and Pisa and, especially, the subjects of the King of Aragon, in small groups, incidentally, had settled in these ports and their commercial relations were essentially limited to coastal towns. They never went inland and had no contact even with towns, however important, at some distance from the shore. [103] In this sense, they were tributaries to the Jews who, in fact, had in hand the more important Moroccan business and, as a corollary, the Transsahara trade. [104] In these circumstances it is easy to understand how it was possible to say, that "there was in the XIVth century a veritable

[102] Ibn Abi-Zayd, p. 135. It was so usual in the Middle Ages for those engaged in commerce in North Africa to pay ten per cent on imports; it was generally called the tenth: Decima, Decimum, or simply the right, Drictum. cf. Mas-Latrie, op. cit. p. 197 ff.

[103] Mas-Latrie, p. 329 ff. This was even at a time when, in Morocco, they enjoyed the greatest freedom and the greatest privileges (under Almohad rule, see on p. II, 3-4 and note 31). Access to Fez, Meknes, Marrakesh, even to Rabat was granted only to Christian traders on payment of a second decima (cf. Xavier Lecureul, *Historiques des Douanes au Maroc*, in Archives Marocaines, vol. XV, p. 41; also Gisèle Chovin, op. cit. p. 277).

[104] This role of the Jews, the most important if not the only merchants in Morocco until the time of the French Protectorate, is very largely attested throughout the centuries by numerous texts and documents. Documents of the years 1486 to 1699 published in the *Sources Inédites de l'Histoire du Maroc'* may, for instance, be consulted on this matter also Leon l'Africain, op. cit., passim; Marmol op. cit., passim. Until the XVIth century, the only people who could provide information on this, i.e. Jewish and Arabic authors, remained silent. The Responsa of the Rabbis of Algiers, Duran and Barfat from the end of the XIVth century may also be consulted. The valuable information by European travellers; highly significant (because generally found in writings of authors hostile towards Jews) *Relation anonyme*, published in London by John Charlewood, dated 1578, passim; Thomas Le Gendre, *Lettre escrite en réponse à diverses questions curieuses sur les parties de l'Afrique*, etc. (1670), passim; Roland Fréjus, *Relation d'un voyage fait dans la Mauritanie*, etc. (1670) passim; Simon Ockley, *Relation des Etats de Fez et de Maroc*. Fr. transl. Paris, 1726, pp. 57-59; M. de Saint-Olon, *Relation de l'Empire du Maroc*, Paris 1695, p. 145; Braithwaite, *Histoire des Révolutions*

Jewish period in Barbary and in the Sahara". [105] How real this economic power of the Jews was can be gauged by the

de l'Empire de Maroc, transl. Paris, 1739 pp. 250-51, 341, 431; Colonel Keating, *Travels in Europe and Africa*. . . A Journey through. . . to Morocco, etc. (1787), London, 1816, p. 303; William Lemprière, *A Tour from Gibraltar to Tangier, Salee, Mogadore*, etc, London, 1791, pp. 190, 284; Ali-Bey al-Abassi, *Travels of*. . . (1803/7), London, 1816, p. 34; J. Graberg di Hemso, *Specchio di Marocco*, Geneva, 1834, p. 51; A. Marcet, *Le Maroc*, Paris 1885, p. 219, etc etc. Arab nomads, who constituted a serious danger to North Africa, did however play a part in developing trans-Sahara trade. The periodic movements of these nomad bands helped in the exchange of food supplies (cf. Georges Marçais, *La Berbérie Musulmane*, Paris, 1946, pp. 288-89). The Maqil Arabs, mingling with Moors of Berber origin' at that time doubtless, as today, formed the desert caravans. Their relations with the Jews were based on a common interest. In this way fairly strong links were established between them which explains their attitude to each other during the XIIIth, XIVth and XVth centuries. Traces of this, persisting in the XIXth century, shed full light on the subject. In fact, in the middle of the XIXth century, Arabs, real wild animals as Ibn-Khaldūn already called them, killed without any pity men of their own race and religion belonging to a different party. They then carried the bleeding heads and placed them at the feet of their women, who insulted and cursed them. "Only three groups were excepted from this barbarous custom: marabouts, blacksmiths and Jews, the first out of respect, the others out of contempt" (Carette et Renou, *Recherches sur la géographie et le commerce de l'Algérie méridionale*, Paris 1844, pp. 165-66). The word contempt was easily said when speaking about Jews. The Moslems of Tadla had no particular respect for them. However Jews could cross this region of Marocco where at the end of the last century two tribes flourished who were particularly known for their hostility to Jews. "Their territory was absolutely forbidden to this race", the anti-semite, Charles Foucauld tells us, "if an Israelite wishes to cross it in spite of this, he must disguise himself and take care not to betray himself: if he were recognised he would not escape death. Every Jew found is killed, and the horror he inspires goes so far that his corpse is not despoiled and his goods are thrown to the wind" (Charles de Foucauld, *Reconnaissance au Maroc*, 1883/84, Paris, 1934, p. 263). Anyone familiar with this region of Tadla will see here the hatred of deserters. This hatred may be real but, in the Nomad Arabs of central Maghrib has no cause for feelings of contempt towards the Jews. Around 1527, Jewish nomads, who constituted an important warrior group in the Gurara (G.S. Colin, op. cit.) could only inspire respect, and their descendants, scattered in the Draa and Wargla, kept intact their physical courage and preserved their warrior traditions until

violence of the reaction it provoked, and which was directed against it on the banks of the Niger between the last years of the XVth century and the beginning of the XVIth. After the destruction of the Jewish kingdom of Toowat and while still under the influence of the fanatic al-Maghilli, [106] the negro King of Timbuctoo became the declared enemy of the Jews: "He does not want one to live in the town. If he hears that a merchant of Barbary frequents them or trades with them, his goods are confiscated". [107]

Here, as elsewhere economic power conferred political power. To the large number of Jews formerly persecuted by the Almohads; to those, even more numerous, who had only just, so to speak, left the life of the desert for that of the great towns, a new leisure brought refinement of taste, gave to their intellectual faculties an opportunity of developing, and to their mind time for culture. The Jewish comunities in the reign of Abu-Yakub and after seem to have shown outstanding qualities. [108] And this environment, because it was

the end of the XIXth century before they emigrated to urban centres in the North (see inter alia Charles Féraud, *Les Harar, Seigneurs des Hanencha, Revue Africaine*, 1874, pp. 3132). Smiths were spared in wars on account of their social position, which made their existence necessary to the tribes and to other clans. They were also feared becuase they had the reputation of being magicians.—A Jewish origin is also attributed to *them* (cf. Charles Monteil, *Problèmes du Soudan Occidental, Juifs et Judaïsés, Hesperis*, vol. XXXVIII, 1951, p. 285 et seq.)

[105] Augustin Bernard, *l'Algerie*, Paris, 1929, p. 364.

[106] Driven from the Toowat after the terror he had unleashed, Al-Maghilli joined the fanatic Askia the Great, usurper of the power in Sudan, who gave him a position at his court.

[107] Léon l'Africain, op. cit. p. 468; Marmol. op. cit. III, p. 63.

[108] It is not possible to give here an overall picture of the cultural and intellectual life of the Jews under the rule of the first Marinides. The subject deserves an important separate study. In the interest of clarity we will however add to the brief indications already given the following information: During the period under review there existed in Morocco many doctors, fully trustworthy. The fanatic Vizir, Ibn Marzuk (d. 1379) was pleased that the bigoted Sultan, the Marinide Abu-L-Haṣan (1331-51) did not wish to employ them at court (cf. *Lévi-Provençal, Un nouveau texte d'histoire Mérénide, le Musnad d'Ibn*

cultivated, intelligent and wealthy, enabled some of its members to take part in the government of the country. A Zenata tribe, as yet mingled with no outsider, was in power; during the period in question, a time, when reacting against Almohad dealings, the religious fanaticism directed against the Jews was not the order of the day. Its supporters lay waiting but did not yet act.

Marzuk, *Hesperis*, 1925, 1st quarter), a fact which is regretted by one famous scholar, also a Moslem Moroccan jurisconsult, Muḥammad al-Maqari, (d. 1357) (cf. *Istiqça*, IV, p. 292) Yet the period was given to intolerance. The rulers of Grenada and Morocco were making preparations to attack the Christians of Spain. It was at this time that a scholar from Grenada, Muḥammad Al-Laḥmi aš-Saqûri, wrote a polemical work against the Jewish doctors, entitled Qam' Al-Yahûdi 'an ta' Addi l-Ḥudûd (The crushing of the Jew so that he shall not step out of the limits—assigned to him—cf. H.P.J. Renaud, *Un médecin du royaume de Grenade*, *Hesperis*, 1946, p. 133). Towards 1310, we find in Fez, the Jewish mathematician of Berber origin, Khalluf al-Maghilli (see note 121) a respected master in his field; also a man who constructed astrolabes, a Jew of Spanish origin, Jacob ben Moise Tapiéro (cf. G.S. Colin, *Un Juif marocain constructeur d'astrolabes Hesperis*, 1936, pp. 184-85) The famous Mâgânâ (a clock with a striking mechanism of automatic figures) in Fez was doubtless the work of a converted Jew (cf. *Istiqça*, IV, p. 332) who constructed it in the reign of Abû 'Inan (1351-58). Another Jew not a convert, is said to have cast a spell on it; since then it has not worked (cf. A. Bel, *Inscriptions arabes de Fez*, *Journal Asiatique*, vol. XII, 1918, p. 358) The Jewish and Moslem elite of Morocco met in the first half of the XIVth century and together studied astronomy, mathematics and philosophy. Abû L-'Abbas Ibn Al-Bannâ (1256-1321) of Marrakesh, composed, among other writings his Risâla fi 'l-Anwâ. To the best of our knowledge, this is the only Moslem calendar in which are mentioned anniversaries of certain Jewish prophets and their fast days (cf. H.P.J. Renaud, *Le Calendrier d'Ibn al-Bannâ*, text and transl. Paris, 1948). Morocco was at this time the only country where Gentiles and Jews together studied the *Guide of the Perplexed*, which many rabbis in Spain, in the Holy Land, in Italy and in Germany, considered dangerous for the Jewish faith. For this reason the commentator and great admirer of Maimonides, Joseph ben Caspi, wanted to go to Fez. Maimonides was born and died in Spain, but Joseph ben. Caspi was born in Morocco, where his father, a great Cabbalist, had already lived. He died before 1365 (On this not very original philosopher, although he has other merits, see G. Vajda, *Judah ben Nissim ibn Malka, philosophe juif marocain*, Collection Hesperis, 1954).

This background must be taken into account if one wishes to explain the rise of the *Waqqasa* Jews. In order to be able to take over the direction of public affairs, of finance, police, foreign relations, they were in no way obliged to flatter, as has been said, the depraved tastes of a sovereign fond of wine, as, according to Ibn-Khaldūn,was the case with the Sultan Abû-Yakub. It was enough that the Waqqasa and other Jews were the only merchants of the land, the only ones with whom the sovereign and other leading persons in the country could be associated in profitable transaction with the Sudan or with Europe. [109] It is enough that they

[109] We have neither texts nor explicit documents concerning these associations of the Sultans with Jewish merchants during the Marinide period. We do know that Jews were stewards in their palaces, managing their lands and possessions. It would be normal that that they should also be entrusted with funds to invest in commerce. Islam, incidentally allows commandite (Qirad). Moslem theologians of the Malekite school, Khalil ben Ishâq and Ibn Abi Zayd (op. cit. p. 207) held that *Qirad* means placing funds into someone's hands to be used in commerce, in return for a share in the profits made on these funds. Although a 'Hadit' most strongly condemned all association with tribute paying subjects, (cf. I. Goldziher, *Le Dogme et la Loi de l'Islam*, transl. p. 258 and note 2) there were people who authorised it and referred to the prophet Mohammed himself as example (Abou-Youssef Yacoub, op. cit., p. 77 ff.). Last and most important, the attitude of the sovereigns of Morocco towards Jews from the establishment of the Watasside dynasty to that of the Alawides on this question still ruling today proves not only that they were concerned to render conduct legitimate in the eyes of Moslem law and that these associations were part of a tradition inherited from the Marinide period. We have the names of some of these 'merchants of the Sultan: Jacob Rosales, a distinguished diplomat (Sihm, France, 1st series, I, documents V, VI; Spain I, document XIII; Portugal II, documents CXXVIII, CL, CLXVI), an important arms supplier (Sihm, Portugal II, document CXIX); a merchant of international standing (Bernardo Rodrigues, *Anais de Arzila*, 2 vols. Lisbon, 1915-19, II, p. 191); and Louis de Sousa, *Annales de Jean III*, 1521-1557, Fr. transl. by R. Ricard, Paris, 1940, pp. 138-39) the 'Naguid' of the Jews in the kingdom of Fez (J.M. Toledano, op. cit. pp. 62, 63, 72; J. Benaim, op. cit.), author of 'taqanot' who, in the reign of Ahmed al-Wattasi (1524-48) was the latter's ambassador and business transactor. At the court of another Watasside prince, the king of Velez, these functions were carried out by Abraham Cordovi (Sihm, Portugal II, documents

were the only bankers at a time when the country was deeply involved in a terrible and doubtless very costly struggle against the rival kingdom of Tlemcen.

CXXXIX, CXLIII). In the reign of Moulay Abdallah al-Ghalib (1557-74), the Saadine, two Jewish merchants had the monopoly of all Moroccan products (Sihm, England I, document XXXVIII). Moulay Ahmed al-Mansour entrusted the production and sale of Moroccan sugar, which was world famous, solely to Jews, who paid the Sultan in grain. (Sihm, England I passim; Al-Oufrâni, *Nozhet al-Hâdi*, Fr. transl. by Houdas, Paris, 1889, p. 302). Whatever that this Sultan bought in Europe, all merchandise, including arms and ammunitions, he paid for with bills of exchange supplied by Jews (Sihm, England I, Introduction IX and X and various documents). Under Moulay Zidan (1603-18) and his heirs until the end of the Saadine dynasty in 1659, the Jews combined the position of bankers to the Sultan with charge of the treasury funds and also continued to be adjudicators of customs and monopoly duties placed on consumer goods (Sihm, Netherlands, I, p. 343 and note 3; Netherlands II, III, IV passim; France, 1st series II and III passim). These Jews were styled 'King's traffiquers', or 'Merchants of your Majesty'. They were the Toujar es-Soultan (appointed merchants to the Sultan) of the Alawide dynasty. The founder of this dynasty, Moulay er-Rachid, (1667-72) had in his service one of these merchants, Aaron Carsinet כרסאי (on this name cf. note 46; J.M. Toledano op. cit. p. 42; Youssef Benaim, op. cit. p. 83), 'jeweller to the king', 'kings's almoner' as Roland Fréjus was called, (op. cit. passim) knew him personally. History has preserved a large number of names of these 'Toujar es-soultan' in the reign of Moulay Ismael (1672-1727). They are mainly those of the families of Meknès (the Benatar, the Toledano, the Maimoran families) who had 'financed' the accession to the throne of this famous Sultan. During the long reign of Sidi Mohammed ben Abdallah (1757-90), a particularly calm and prosperous period which followed thirty years of anarchy, the 'Toujar es-soultan', residing, by order of the sovereign, in Mogador, a town recently founded by him (1760) the only port open to international trade, enjoyed a great privilege. The most important among them were the Delmar (cf. Samuel Romanelli, op. cit. passim) and the Corcos family (cf. James Grey Jackson, An account of Timbouctou and Housa, London, 1820, pp. 160, 405). On the subject of these privileged people, the representative of the kingdom of France in Morocco gave the following details"; More industrious, more skilled than the Moors, the Jews are employed by the Emperor in the assessment of customs, the minting of money, in matters related to buying and selling undertaken by the Prince with Europeans as well as in all negotiations with European courts" (Louis Chénier, op. cit. III, p. 132). In the days of Moulay Sliman (1792-1822), fortunes acquired throughout several generations

During the reign of Abû-Yussef and Abû-Yakub, the Waqqasa of Fez had quite naturally risen to the highest ranks of society. They were 'stewards', merchants, bankers, astronomers, astrologers, and perhaps also physicians. One of their nember, an intimate friend of the sovereign, became Vizir. He was the first minister of Abû-Yakub and was called Khalifa ben Waqqasa. To be continued

by the 'appointed merchants to the Sultan', such as the Cohen-Macnin or the Sebag family (since the death of Sir Moses Montefiore the Sebag-Montefiore, legitimately inheriting his illustrious name and his fortune) had become so famous that they inspired a well-known English writer, Richard Cumberland, to write a novel, entitled simply *The Jew of Mogador*, which appeared in London in 1808 (on Cumberland and on this novel see Louis Zangwill, 'Richard Cumberland Centenary Memorial Paper' in Tjhse no. 7, 1911/14). We will conclude this already rather long note with a final example of service by a Jew which is an illustration of all the others: in the collection of Arab documents handed down from various Sultans of Morocco and their Vizirs, as yet unpublished but which the present author hopes to publish in the near future, there is, among others a 'Dahir' (equivalent to the Turkish 'Firman'), dated 14th Safar 1263 (11th February, 1846) in which the Sultan Moulay Abd er-Rahman ben Hicham entrusted Solomon Corcos with a very important sum of money, to be "invested in Christian lands" (sic).